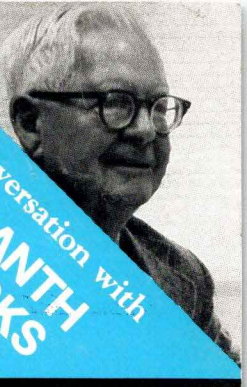
THE SOUTHERN PARTISAN

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 2 SPRING 1983



A Conversation with CLEANTH BROOKS

The Southern Tradition 20 Years After Richard Weaver

The Battle Continues...

By Tom Landess

ALSO INSIDE:

Robert Drake on Southern Writing
Boyd Cathey on Russell Kirk's New Book
Rod Gragg on James J. Kilpatrick
Buckley on Capitalism and Much More...

Cover Note:

On the night of April 2, 1865, during the evacuation of Richmond, Dr. T. A. LaFar began gathering South Carolina flags to prevent their capture by the advancing Union army. The battleflag photographed on our cover is one of those saved by Dr. LaFar. It was never surrendered.

In July of 1863 Dr. LaFar had taken over the task of running the South Carolina Hospital Association in Virginia. This organization was responsible for establishing hospitals, collecting needed supplies and distributing them to the sick and wounded—both in the field and hospitals. Dr. LaFar was a member of the executive committee of the association, a practicing physician, and he assumed his additional responsibilities upon the death of the Reverend R. W. Barnwell, the former chief of the association.

John A. Martin, Jr.
SC Confederate Relic Room & Museum

THE SOUTHERN PARTISAN

A Publication of the Foundation for American Education

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 2 SPRING 1983

FEATURES

LANDESS ON WEAVER

Richard Weaver died on April 3, 1963—twenty years ago this year. *Southern Partisan* Senior Editor Tom Landess tells us that the battle Weaver fought twenty years ago remains unresolved. The Southern tradition is still at bay—but the tide may be turning. ..... beginning on page 11.

THE PARTISAN CONVERSATION

CLEANTH BROOKS, the great Southern teacher, critic, writer and man of letters is lovingly interviewed by one of his students (Yale class of '52) Senior Editor Reid Buckley. They cover education, language, literature and—of course—the South. ..... beginning on page 22.

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ALAN FLANDERS tells the tale of the Confederate ironclad that shattered the Union blockade of the Virginia coast, if only for one day. And that day changed the history of naval warfare. 27

THE DREAM OF THE ROOD

RHEA THOMAS WORKMAN gives us an original translation of an eighth century Anglo-Saxon poem, an early and beautiful example of the impact of the crucifixion on Western civilization. 20

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JOHN BLIESE on The New Nationalism/LAKE HIGH on Tom Wolfe
HARRY HOPE on Andy Griffith, all beginning on page 30

THE SOUTHERN PARTISAN

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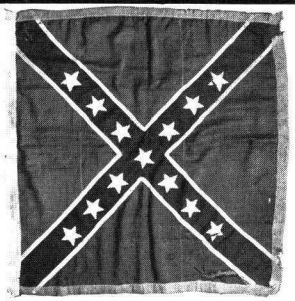

COVER PHOTO BY NOLAN NINABACH

PARTISAN LETTERS

Landess Soft on Lyndon

Gentlemen:

Thomas Landess is a fellow of great talent and insight and it is always a pleasure to read his work. Like all of us, however, he is not perfect and he certainly proved it in his review of Robert A. Caro's *The Years of Lyndon Johnson: The Path to Power.*

It would be safe to call Landess a Johnson-watcher, I suppose, and from his vantage point at the University of Dallas he has certainly had the opportunity. He knows Johnson, I will grant. What I will not grant is two things in his essay, one stated and the other implied. First, in the last paragraph of the essay, Landess says, "...for he [Johnson] is, after all, as I have already suggested, our kinsman, our fellow-Southerner, our brother."

Let us discuss this a moment. It is true that Johnson was a Texan...However, Texas is a large state and is, in truth, at least two states, one Southern (a la East Texas piney woods and cotton fields) and the other, separated by plains, not so Southern (West Texas a la cactus, sand and western diamond back rattlers). Or for another view, in his book *The Nine Nations of North America*, Joel Garreau splits Texas and puts the parts into three different "nations," Dixie, Mexamerica, and The Breadbasket. Given the evidence, it is a bit presumptuous for us to place all Texas born people in the main stream of the South.

In truth, Johnson was subjected to a blending of cultures and only some of the influence that he received was Southern. This showed up mostly in his courtly manner toward women, most noticeable when compared to the Yankees around him in Washington. This made him appear positively cavalier, but then any Southerner short of an ax murderer looks genteel in a room full of Yankees.

But remember that he lived on the LBJ *Ranch* not the LBJ *Plantation*, and when questioned he referred to himself (except when politically expedient) as a Westerner. And he meant with cowboy hat and boots, beef barbeque, branding irons, shooting irons, the works. His inclination as well as his heritage was far more Western than Southern.

Johnson's parentage was Southern, and it's true that can go a long way in the shaping of a person. Indeed, Johnson's father is spoken of by Robert Caro as a decent, hard working, God fearing, family man who struggled all of his life to provide for his family and help his neighbors (characteristics which, unfortunately, didn't pass on to Lyndon either by heredity or environment). But then we must remember that Abraham Lincoln was born in the Southern state of Kentucky...and of Southern parents who were of Virginia and Tennessee heritage. Despite those advantages, no one ever confused either Lincoln's Presidency or his ideology with that of the South.

The only time I ever remember Johnson's Southerness being stressed was in 1960 when the Democrats and the news media were trying to convince Southern voters that it would be all right to vote for the Kennedy-Johnson ticket because even though Kennedy was a one hundred per cent Boston-Baked-Yankee, good ol' Lyndon would look out for "his own." We saw how that turned out.

The second thing Landess implies with the use of words such as "kinsman" and "brother" is that somehow we are to revere or forgive this man. Even if he is rotten, we are to put aside the considerations of his nature because we are somehow tied to him.

Are we supposed to overlook blatant dishonesty (even Johnson's supporters don't bother to deny it) and crude single-minded pursuit of enrichment that makes a mockery of "public trust?" If

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The *Southern Partisan Quarterly Review* was founded in 1979 by Tom Fleming of McClellanville, South Carolina, who published two issues. The magazine was later acquired by the Foundation for American Education. Publication was resumed under the shorter title, *The Southern Partisan*, in the summer of 1981.

the man had been a conservative politician (or even a moderate) and had been one-tenth as dishonest or one-tenth as unworthy he would have been driven from office in such a fashion as to make Nixon's departure look like a testimonial dinner.

Are we supposed to make excuses for our criminals, or are we supposed to put them in jail? I don't care that the sneak thief who invades my home and takes my possessions is born and raised in my region. I don't feel any brotherhood or kinship with him. I just want him arrested and punished. Are we to be encouraged to sport a double standard just because Yankees and liberals do? If so, we sink to their level.

No, we don't need to recognize our "brother" Lyndon Johnson. He *isn't* our brother. Thank God.

Sincerely,
Lee Jones
Lexington, Kentucky

Mr. Landess Replies:

First, I'm sympathetic with Mr. Jones' desire to weasel out of responsibility for Lyndon Johnson. I'd like to disown him myself, not only as a Southerner but as a member of the human race. However, the Texas Hill Country is too much like the hard-scrabble land in parts of Tennessee, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Kentucky to avoid comparison; and Lyndon is too much like the politicians these states have sent to Washington. I know of no California senator who resembles Lyndon Johnson so much as do Estes Kefauver, Olin D. Johnston, Herman Talmadge, John Sparkman, and Happy Chandler—to name but a few.

Second, I don't think that just because a man is your kinsman you have to "revere" him. Southerners—who keep up with their families more than other Americans—know just how sorry and undeserving a good many kinsmen are. Go to any family reunion and listen to the gossip. I had a great uncle who—as best I can tell—embezzled money from three banks, all of which failed and left the depositors penniless. I don't revere him, but I can't deny he was my own flesh and blood.

As for forgiveness, the most obvious reply is to quote the Lord's Prayer, but who needs God when we have Robert E. Lee, a general who shot his own troops when they straggled, always, I'm sure, with a forgiving heart. My point is that to forgive a man and to be soft on him are two different things. You can forgive a murderer and serenely throw the switch that sends him off to his even more forgiving Maker. I'm sure that on reflection Mr. Jones will agree, particularly when I assure him that I disapprove of Lyndon just as much as he does. It's just that I didn't want any Yankee getting too holier-than-thou with him.

P.S. My wife agrees with Mr. Jones. She says I was soft on Lyndon and that I ought to be ashamed of myself.

Will To Tax

Gentlemen:

I have read with approval your criticisms of the "sometimes conservative" George Will.

One of Mr. Will's most obnoxious points, in his rhetoric, is that "America is fundamentally undertaxed." During the many hours of the Conservative Political Action Conference I viewed, I did not hear anyone share his view.

Perhaps, Mr. Will's "sometime" conservatism is what makes him attractive to the producers of "This Week with David Brinkley."

Respectfully,
David Bradley
Ashland, Kentucky

A Pearl of Great Price

Gentlemen:

The Southern Partisan is the magazine I have been looking for and waiting for. To think, I almost did not pick up a sample copy a friend was offering at our local Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting! I would have missed a "pearl" of great price...

I love (present tense: I continue to love them and I go back and reread them) the article-essays (especially "Southern Nationalism") but also the regular features ("Whistling Dixie: Why No Southern Nationalism, II" and "Obiter Dicta: Without Freedom of Speech").

Then my friend showed me the most recent issue with the article "John C. Calhoun Vindicated" and "Devoutly Speaking: The Presbyterian Church Divides" I came to the conviction that you are not far from a sound philosophy of government and that you use a scalpel, not a hatchet, in dividing theological-ecclesiastical issues. I also love the book reviews and the cultural critiques. Therefore, I cannot afford to be without any more issues...

Reid Buckley's, "The Last Word: Paul Newman Announces for a Nuclear Freeze" is worth the price of an entire year's subscription! At that, I will snicker all the way to the Post Office to mail this.

Sincerely,
Robert Penny, D. Min.
Columbus, Mississippi

Oath of Solidarity

Gentlemen:

I am writing to express my appreciation for your journal; it is a joy to read. As a recent college graduate (Boston College '82) publications such as yours helped fortify me against some of the outlandish foolishness that passes for truth on the college campus. Though I have never been south of Cape Cod I feel a great sense of solidarity with the plight of the traditional Southerner, and I have an enormous amount of respect for those ideals. I believe this is the case because of my status as the son of immigrants from the Connemara Gaeltacht in the west of Ireland. Like you, I have resisted the corrosive acids of modernism, and I have done battle (in a small way) with the same forces who reduce the beauties of traditional culture to absurd cliches and commercial rip-offs (try listening to what passes for Irish music on Boston radio stations!). I have also been disheartened by the complacency of those who share the same heritage and join in the dance of death. However, I promise not to give in so long as you pledge the same.

Sincerely,
Michael Walsh
Dorchester, Massachusetts

Dear Sir:

We do. And you should hear what passes for country music on a lot of our stations.

Erin Go Bragh!
—The Editors

Union Doesn't Suit

Gentlemen:

May I suggest that you cease calling the northern army and faction "Union" and use exclusively the word "federal?" Lincoln's party did not save the Union; they destroyed it... the South was not trying to destroy the Union, rather trying to preserve it...

Admiringly,
Charles T. Pace, M.D.
Greenville, North Carolina

Untrained Egos

Writer Reid Buckley scored a direct hit on why those in show business must make their political views known to the public. Many actors and actresses make so much money (they are grossly overpaid for their talent) they can retire early in life and their egos must find a vocation that requires little or no training, so they enter the political scene.

Sincerely,
Charles S. Peete, Jr.
Memphis, Tennessee

A Copperhead Speaks

Gentlemen:

Please find enclosed a subscription renewal from a "Copperhead." Sometime I'd like to see an article on this subject—and yes!, you are saying many things that I've longed to hear!

Best Wishes,
R.H. Curtiss
Los Angeles, CA

A Thousand-To-One

(*Editor's Note:* Last issue, on a subscription advertisement, we printed an old Southern family portrait, circa 1910, showing a handsome family of eight members plus an alert looking dog. The photograph came from the files of Alt-Lee studio in Columbia, South Carolina. It was over 70 years old and even though there was no family name in the file, we published it anyway. After all that time, no one would ever recognize the subjects. Right?)

Gentlemen:

Not even Lloyd's of London or Jimmy the Greek would have given odds that the portrait would be recognized by a *Southern Partisan* subscriber in Mississippi. But it was: the prettiest girl in the picture became much later my grandmother. And the chiefest reason for my delighted laugh was—you'll never guess—the credit line! (Alt-Lee Studios) I remember so well all those Christmas mornings when my grandmother was up to her ears in last-minute wrappings of presents. She always just barely finished before we arrived. Those were the times we called her "Mrs. Alt-Lee"—photo finish!

But credit where credit is due: Long before Alt-Lee was in business, the original was done in 1910 by Blanchard's Photographers. In 1977 Alt-Lee did reprints for another granddaughter, who gave them to us as Christmas presents.

That's one reason the last issue is very special to me. Another reason is the "Coogler Revisited" article which refers to a Mississippi former student who "gleed" over her professor's "notoriety." I'm that girl.

Coogler and Calhoun all in one issue surely make for variegated reading.

Thank you,
Name withheld by request.
Jackson, Mississippi

Dear Madam:

So much for the odds.

—The Editors

Coogler Revisited

The "Coogler Revisited" article in your Winter issue has substantially increased Cooglerian membership across the land, from Connecticut to Liberty, Missouri, and points south, with many of our charter members ordering additional books and the *Southern Partisan* for their "Poetry Appreciation" files.

Your readers will be interested to know that a Coogler Shrine has been erected in the Hilltop Room of the American Legion building in Columbia and the town council of Blythewood (formerly Doko, birthplace of J. Gordon Coogler) is considering establishing a "Return-to-Doko Festival" this September to bring further recognition to this too-long neglected poet.

Thank you, sir, for assisting true-poetry lovers to let them eat cake—though, as the two who began this revival, we follow Coogie's own doctrine and continue to eat humble pie.

Rene LaBorde, co-editor
Coogler's *Purely Original Verse**

**The Neuffer-LaBorde reprint of Coogler's* Purely Original Verse *($6) is still available and may be ordered from Professor Claude Henry Neuffer,* Names in South Carolina, *USC English Dept., Columbia, S.C. 29208.*

Calhoun Described

You have done us all a service in renewing our acquaintance with the philosophy of John C. Calhoun. Your readers might also enjoy acquaintance with an interesting friendship of his, probably little known even to them.

For the lady in the case, it began with a flying visit of the already great man to Vicksburg, Mississippi. He was coming downriver from a convention in Memphis, riding the steamboat *Maria* to New Orleans. Varina was on the way to Washington with her husband, a Democrat newly elected to the House of Representatives. She had been a Whig until her marriage nine months before, and was prepared to be only "coolly civil"; "but when Mr. Calhoun, with head erect, cast his eagle eyes over the crowd, I felt like rising up to do homage to a king among men." He had "the most glorious pair of yellow brown shining eyes, that seemed to have a light inherent in themselves... When excited, the pupils filled the iris and made his eyes seem black. He lowered them less than any one I have ever seen." His long hair combed straight back from the forehead above bushy eyebrows, "with his brilliant eyes and unflinching gaze, gave his head the expression of an eagle's. His mouth was wide and straight; he rarely smiled, and the firm square chin and grave manner made a personality striking in the extreme. He was tall and slenderly built, quick and alert." His voice was that "of a professor of mathematics," well suited to "his didactic discourse." "His language was plain to poverty; he never used a trope or simile; and seemed to argue as though alone with one man....He spoke so fast, in words so concise, that the loss of one or two rendered it hard to follow him....He made few gestures, but those nervous, gentlemanly hands seemed to point the way to empire....It was the chart of his faith which he turned toward us and explained its bearings, taking it for granted we were to sail with him; and I do not think anyone present would have hesitated then to do so."

Mr. Calhoun, having won his convert, proceeded to flatter this nineteen-year-old matron with his attention the rest of the evening while others danced. She was his friend for life. Five years later, because of their known fondness for each other she was seated by the indulgence of the vice-president on the floor of the Senate when Calhoun was helped in to defend his last speech gasping and feverish—"but his eagle glance swept the Senate in the old lordly way. Seeing me, he gave me one burning hand as he passed, and whispering, 'My child, I am too weak to stop,' he passed on and dropped into his seat." Recounting how all his letters to her were lost during the War between the States, she says the loss was hers, not posterity's, they were so illegible. "I once sent him back his letter to read for me, and he responded, 'I know what I think on this subject, but cannot decipher what I wrote.'"...

Yours truly,
Mrs. Ward S. Allen
Auburn, Alabama ⊠

A PARTISAN VIEW

Richard M. Quinn

Reflections on the Battle Flag

The old banner displayed on our cover was selected long before Chancellor Porter Fortune announced his decision to ban the Confederate battle flag at Old Miss. Still, readers from Mississippi (and elsewhere) are invited to regard our cover flag as an act of defiance against the pettish pressure to which Chancellor Fortune so readily succumbed.

The news of Fortune's decision came just as we were going to press. Therefore, publication was delayed long enough to bump a less deserving Scalawag and to hang that honor squarely on Fortune's shoulders (page 7) for displaying that peculiar brand of character that knows neither victory nor defeat.

Of course, Chancellor Fortune probably thought of himself as a sly old fox. He said he was banning only the flag's *official* use, and that students were free to wave it unofficially. If there was one lesson learned in the campus riots of the 1960's, surely it was that such limp-wristed compromise only serves to inflame both sides. When opinions are sharply divided (and emotions are running hot) everyone hates the guy who tries to dance along the fence.

So let us be decisive:

Those who carry on about the battle flag as a "racist symbol" demonstrate a pitiable ignorance of history. If a flag that flew historically over slave-holding states is automatically racist, then they ought to be banning Old Glory, because the Stars and Stripes flew over slave-holding states, North and South, for eighty years prior to the War for Southern Independence. Indeed, until 1833, the British flag (and every other flag in Western Europe) flew over slave-holding powers. When slavery was abolished in England, Parliament generously appropriated the huge sum of 20 million pounds to compensate British planters for their "property" loss.

The point is that human slavery was a routine part of the world's economy from the beginning of time until well into the nineteenth century. The Southern Confederacy existed for only a few years, at a time when many Southerners had already freed their slaves (and most white Southerners had never owned any in the first place).

Robert E. Lee, for example, wrote that "slavery as an institution is a moral and political evil." He freed his slaves in the late 1840's. General Grant, on the other hand, who commanded the Union forces, held his own slaves until 1865, four years before he was elected to the presidency. Yet those who rant about racist symbols insist on flailing the South perpetually.

For some of us, the whip has lost its sting. Because we know the truth. Others in the South, like Chancellor Fortune at Ole Miss, have finally embraced The Lie. For them, the moralist's whip is a cleansing ritual of flagellantism. To be forgiven by their accusers for the "sins" of their fathers, they will pay anything—do anything, even savage their own heritage.

No one is entitled to demand that we militate against our own past. During the War Between the States, nearly 300,000 Southern men and boys died bravely in an epic struggle that remains the dominant event of American history. The battle flag still stands as a symbol of the Southern character, a determination to be left alone, and a will toward independence. It has nothing to do with slavery. But it does have a lot to do with integrity.

Flannery O'Conner instructed us that integrity is usually defined by what we are *not* willing to do. By his actions and agreements, a man may prove that he is nasty, honest, petulant, foolish, or wise. But it is what he refuses to do that takes the true measure. The word "No" must be in the vocabulary of a person—or a people—with integrity.

Therefore, to the chanting mob that pushes us to disown our native history and to disgrace our ancestors by tossing out the symbols of our past, we say "No!" The flag will stay. We are proud of it.

And not only that, we invite *all* Americans to look to that simple design, the Southern Cross, as a symbol of the independent spirit that founded our Republic.

Tarnished Gold

Newsweek magazine celebrated its 50th anniversary this year with a 160 page "Special Edition" modestly entitled "The American Dream."

In a grand democratic gesture *Newsweek* decided to write about the little people who "live the news" rather than the men and women who "make the news." So the editors selected five typical American families from all regions and walks of American life, tracing their histories back to the earliest days of their American experience.

How, then, does the South fit into *Newsweek's* vision of the American dream? Here's how it goes:

An evil white Southern planter "took his pleasure" with a slave girl (how *Newsweek* verified this is not made clear) who then gave birth to a half-breed son. The planter ripped the babe from his mother's arms, sold her for profit and put the boy to work. As a handsome, angry young man (shades of Mandingo), he rode the freedom train to Ohio where he became the great grandfather to the black woman who started the civil rights movement in Ohio and who presumably gave *Newsweek* this colorful family history.

In point of fact, massive evidence suggests that slave families were rarely separated. Efforts were made uniformly across the South to keep families together (in part because good morale was good for business). The record also shows that many freed slaves stayed South, kept close ties with their former owners and found for themselves a life altogether more satisfying than their cousins who ended up sleeping with rats in Harlem under the shadow of *Newsweek's* editorial offices.

OBITER DICTA

Only in Chicago

A while back, Teamster boss Roy Williams was given a 55-year prison term for attempting to bribe a senator. But Mr. Williams' lawyer implored the court that his 68-year-old client was suffering from emphysema (too many cigars) and shouldn't be sent to jail. Surely, he argued, we can make a deal.

So a deal was struck—Chicagostyle. The prison sentence was suspended by the district judge in exchange for a promise from Williams that he would resign his $225,000-a-year job as president of the Teamsters. Within hours of the ruling, Williams had checked out of the hospital and was en route to his Kansas farm hideaway.

But in Chicago, that's. OK. In fact, Williams is now qualified to run for mayor.

Just a Few More Questions

Lech Walesa, please call your answering service. The government is trying to reach you.

The Worm Turns

Walter Mondale of Minnesota came South recently for a speech to a North Carolina teachers meeting in Raleigh. Reaganomics, he said, "is a colossal failure" and "a dagger in the heart of industry." Not only that, he added that big deficits have "sapped up America's savings."

Such conservative chirpings from an old liberal like Mondale (who is now engaged in a frenzied effort to style himself as a centrist) reveal just how far to the right the political center of American politics shifted in the 1980 election—a fact too often overlooked by Reagan himself. But here's the point: Certainly by 1980, American voters had decreed that liberal rhetoric would no longer elect presidents. So if Reagan fails to deliver the promised goods, who then are the voters likely to turn to? Fritz Mondale?

Bob Whitaker, in *The New Right Papers*, makes the right point precisely. If vandals wreck our house and the first handy man we hire to repair it fails to do so, we are not likely to invite the vandals back in to do the job.

Mondale was a leader of the gang whose manipulations brought the country to ruin: Jimmy Carter's second-fiddle, Hubert Humphrey's alter-ego, Ted Kennedy's good buddy. Now, struck by lightning on the road to the White House, Walter Mondale is trying to deliver Ronald Reagan's old campaign speeches in the South.

Sorry, Fritz. We ain't quite as dumb as we used to be.

Truth Speaks

According to a recent wire report, federal officials are getting tough on welfare fraud. The report gave a list of indictments handed down against two dozen people who had "made false statements to the Veterans Administration over a three-year period" to get money.

One of the names in the story headlined "Charged with Lying" was a Veritas Eugene Riley. Verily interesting.

The Little Brown Man

With eight academy awards, the movie *Gandhi* is hot property. And its promoters, in great demand on the talk-show circuit, are jetting around the country uttering Asnerisms about how world peace can still be achieved if we but heed the teachings of the little brown man with "the great soul." Also, the predictable (and preposterous) comparisons are being made between Gandhi and Martin Luther King.

Reality is always harsh medicine for such delicate systems but consider recent reports from New Delhi on the legacy of Gandhi: At least 3,600 people, for example, perished in street violence when the Assam state attempted to hold an election; a 100,000 man army is being organized in the Punjab for the purpose of waging religious war; and those who survive the fanatic's sword may end up starving in Bangladesh. In short, the legacy of Gandhi is a country—or rather countries—incapable of government, where Hindus and Moslems still kill each other with gleeful abandon and the economy is in chaos.

But Gandhi will go on being hailed by Hollywood press agents as the man whose civil disobedience brought peace and independence to a divided people, armed only with his wits and his spinning wheel. Such bilge sells tickets.

To be sure, Gandhi was, for all we know, a splendid fellow. And civil disobedience does work—but only in the context of authority exercised by decent leaders who fear bad press and can be manipulated into feelings of guilt or shame. In short, civil disobedience works in the context of a system that could also be changed without resorting to it.

Ask yourself this one: How effective would it be for a Russian Gandhi to stage a hunger strike in the middle of the Gulag? No one would notice. Because no one else there is eating much either. And the prisoners aren't allowed to give speeches or pass out hand bills or march to the sea to make salt.

So the teachings of Gandhi give little guidance in a world where terrorists run the affairs of nations, where the president of the Russian state almost certainly conspired to murder the Pope. In Gandhi's day, British authority was essentially benevolent. In our time, the imperialists who march on the earth are not so easily dealt with.

The Mayor's Race

Chicago has elected a black mayor who, during the course of the campaign, suggested that if he did not win, things "might turn bitter, evil, angry and innocent people might get hurt." Vote for Harold Washington and nobody gets hurt.

Incredible? Outrageous? Sure and more besides. Mr. Washington's march to victory wasn't stalled in the slightest by relevations that he was (a) jailed in 1982 (b) fined for failure to file federal tax returns for four years and (c) disbarred in Illinois for legal malpractice.

Of course, during the campaign, Walter Mondale was on hand to urge that the Democratic faithfull rally behind their sterling candidate. And 13 State Democratic Party Chairmen *from all the states of the Old Confederacy* were flown in to urge white folks *not* to fall prey to "racism." The message from the South, in Harold Washington's words, was "We went through that mess. Don't start it here."

So Mr. Washington's blackness became the compelling consideration. Not to vote for a black candidate was *a priori* a racial decision. So any poor soul who balked over the man's criminal background automatically became a racist. And all those fine riverside white liberals in Chicago scampered like mice in a Skinner box away from the electrical charge of racism.

A quick analysis of the election results shows that Washington got virtually *all* of the black votes, (no ticket-splitting there) and about 20% of the white vote. The other candidate, a bland and inept white liberal Republican named Epton, never knew what hit him. But 80% of the white voters of Chicago showed a bit of backbone. Perhaps that is the big news of the mayoral race. One day soon, the rest of the electorate may realize that bums come in all colors and that credibility should not attach automatically to the rantings of those who cry racist. Only then will the color barriers be finally broken.

No fair-minded observer can doubt that Harold Washington is a man so poorly qualified to hold a position of public trust that, had he been white, his campaign would never have attracted serious attention. Clearly the voters of Chicago are beginning to wonder why it's OK for black politicians to market in race but not OK for white politicians to do the same.

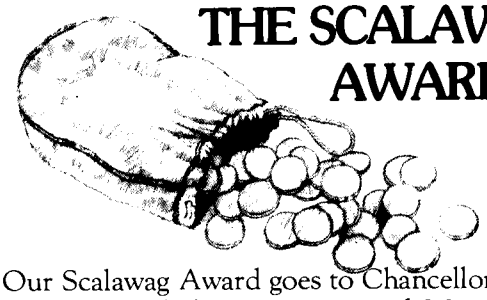
The Serious Candidate

The Associated Press informs us that South Carolina Senator Fritz Hollings is "testy" with reporters who fail to take his presidential candidacy seriously. So to get more serious attention, the Senator has announced that he is "seriously" considering Andrew Young and Gloria Steinem as potential vice-presidents on the Hollings ticket.

Ms. Steinem (the editor of *Ms. Magazine*), legend has it, once turned down the offer of a job as Playboy bunny. Therefore, she is not apt to accept the much less interesting position Senator Hollings has in mind for her. But it was all good for a headline.

Now Senator Hollings has announced his support for the nuclear freeze movement. Look at all the trouble a fellow has to go to these days to be taken seriously by the National Press Corp.

THE SCALAWAG AWARD . . .



Our Scalawag Award goes to Chancellor Porter L. Fortune, Jr. of the University of Mississippi for banning the use of the Confederate flag as an official school symbol. Lydia Spragin, president of the black student union, commended Fortune for taking an "initial step" toward the elimination of "racist symbols."

What will be the next "racist symbol" to go? The Confederate Monuments? Renaming the streets and buildings that honor heroes of the Confederacy? Or perhaps abolition of the state flag of Mississippi, which incorporates the battle flag into its design. If the Chancellor will ban the flag as demanded by 500 blacks in a 9,000-member student body, why stop with the flag?

It is lamentable that the black students at Ole Miss have been fed a distorted view of American history and the meaning of the Confederate battle flag. But their misunderstanding cannot justify denying the majority their birthrights as sons and daughters of brave men who fought and died under the battle flag of the Confederacy.

As for Chancellor Fortune, his performance is a tiresome repetition of the sort of cringing cowardice demonstrated by so many college administrators who capitulated to mob pressure during the Vietnam era, only to discover that the more ground they gave, the greater and more absurd the demands became.

For Fortune, the Scalawag Award will have to suffice, though we are tempted to recommend the Preston Brooks Treatment. The provocation is extreme.

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Farewell To Coach "Bear" Bryant

Mile after mile they stood along the Bear's final highway, a profoundly respectful silence dignifying their ranks as the black hearse sped past them on its mournful journey.

The Bear is dead, leaving with us the stuff of legend, some of it surely apocryphal but mostly true. And all of it believed. He was great in life, and he is certain to become greater with the passage of time.

Paul "Bear" Bryant, though, was not a statesman, a poet or a philosopher. He *was* simply the best college football coach ever. More than that, he was a Christian and a Gentleman. And he was a Southerner. That he was one of us in life made us proud because he knew how to win with that special grace that seems still to elevate our culture above others.

But in the manner of his passing, the Bear returned to us something that no amount of victories could ever equal. He gave us an opportunity to demonstrate that we remain a people from among whom, perhaps uniquely, it is possible to nurture a man like the Bear.

The accolades that came so swiftly from former players, colleagues and reporters upon hearing the news of his death befitted the Bear's record as the winningest college football coach in the game's history. Reading through them now it is impossible not to be impressed, even a little amazed, that one man could inspire such loyalty and love from so many different kinds of people. Yet, clearly he did. The stream of testimonials informed the world that an important man was gone and that he would be missed.

Flowing just below the stream's surface was a far more significant theme. Only a few of the obituaries caught sight of it by suggesting that "he never forgot his roots." But, by and large, the nation's press missed the governing themes of the Bear's life: that he was who he was *because* of his "roots."

He knew it and often talked of it. On the very morning of his passing, he thought about home and said he wanted to go back to his native Arkansas and "do some duck hunting."

The legend flowered in Alabama and there is no doubt that the citizens of that state will keep it in good trust. But the craggy-faced legerdemain never lost the accent of his Moro, Arkansas neighbors, among whom as a youngster he once wrestled a bear at a country fair and secured a nickname.

He was one of 11 kids in Moro's Bryant family, residing, as he later called it, "on a little piece of bottom land on the Moro Creek about seven miles south of Fordyce." Such details of place and land always distinguish the Southerner.

He played in the first football game he ever saw but only after persuading a local cobbler to hammer make-shift cleets to the one pair of shoes he owned. Poor Arkansas boys do not make such sacrifices lightly. Bryant was smitten and the game of football, possessing a martial magic particularly appealing to the descendants of Arkansas' General Sterling Price, dominated the Bear's life from that day forward.

A high school tackle and later the end opposite the Crimson Tide's All American, Don Hutson, Bryant and his Alabama teammates compiled a three year record of 23-3-2. Three years in the Navy interrupted a budding coaching career that commenced soon after his collegiate playing days were at end.

Returning home from the war, Bryant resumed the career that would include stops at Texas A&M, Kentucky and Maryland before his alma mater beckoned. How did he describe that calling? "It was like when you were out in the field and heard your mama calling. Mama called," he said.

The rest is pretty much football history that need not be recounted in detail in this space, except to note five national championships at Alabama, three times national coach of the year and 23 consecutive appearances in post season bowl games. More victorious than any other college coach, he was always graceful in the occasional agonies of defeat, especially so when the victor happened to be a herd of Texas Longhorns who beat his most famous player, Joe Namath, in the Orange Bowl in 1965.

Success in the college ranks naturally led to lucrative offers with professionals of the National Football League. Offered the head coaching job of the Washington Redskins during a visit with that team's owner, General George Preston Marshall, the Bear accepted, contingent only on his wife's agreement to move to the nation's capital. She said "no," exhibiting the good sense characteristic of Southern women; and he, always listening to mama's call, stayed with the Tide.

Still, it was not so much what he did as how the Bear achieved it that gave rise to those countless bowed rows of Southerners lining the length of highway to Tuscaloosa and burial. Nothing so well-told the story of the Bear's life and of the culture from which he sprung than his last passage among us.

Watching the scene flicker on the television sets that mindlessly clutter living rooms and children's heads, those among us who have read yellowing accounts of similar outpourings for other departed Southern chieftains should have recognized the continuity in form of both the mourners and our recently mourned hero.

Only a people who know (if today but by a misty cultural memory) of a collective respect due one who distinguished a way of life and its values will stand in the rain beside a highway for hours-on-end waiting for a moment to say "thank you."

His passing is to be mourned as our loss, to be sure, but, just as he demonstrated in life the Southern Gentleman, the Bear also brought out our best for his farewell. That is our gain and his last, and greatest, accomplishment. ⧓

—*Mark Tapscott*

On The Death Of Tennessee Williams

He was born Thomas Lanier Williams, but his name sounded to him "like it might belong to the sort of writer who turns out sonnet sequences to Spring." This truth hurt so much that the name *Tennessee Williams* was to spring from his audacious conception of himself as issuing from a line of Indian fighters, hard drinkers and orators. Because Williams was born in the South (Columbus, Mississippi) his audience eagerly accepted his audacity: "Why, that's what writers are like down there." Can anyone imagine a Massachusetts Williams?

The South gave Tennessee Williams his name, the myth of the Southern writer, and the pain which creates dramatic poetry from personal tension. Playwriting became his therapy and in the opinion of many, his biography.

The popular view of Williams comes from his fiction. He is the sensitive youth caught in the cruelty of the insensitive inhabitants of the South. Good fiction, perhaps, but untrustworthy as biography.

Williams may very well have understood his early history in terms of an innocent fighting the pain which naturally accompanies an eccentric growing up in the South. The sad irony is that Williams quite heroically endured this rite of passage, but he abandoned his homeland before he could be initiated into its privileges. Once Southerners are certain that a man has earned the right to his eccentricity, they become gentle and accepting as if to say that you must prove your right to do as you please in a trial by suffering. The South has always been proud and protective of its full grown oddities. Tennessee Williams did not wait for such acceptance. The South almost echoes Arnold's lament "Thyrsis" to his friend Arthur Clough, "Too quick despairer, wherefore wilt thou go?"

The pain of Williams' adult life came from many sources, not the least of which was Williams himself. His first real play, "Battle of Angels" was hissed, booed and abandoned in the civilized city of Boston. Northern critics excoriated Williams for his decadent Southern themes and characters. These critics did not understand, as Flannery O'Connor explained, that the reason grotesques seem to flourish in the fiction of Southern writers is that Southerners can recognize grotesque when they see them. Williams said: "I deal with decadence of the South. I don't ever deal with the decadence of the North. It's too disgusting." Yet the North catered to the decadence of Williams' personal life. The less said about the cruel pandering to and manipulating of Williams' weaknesses the better. One must say, however, that the writing suffered. Williams learned an agonizing truth: the mind is not its own place, and Hell could not be made Heaven nor Heaven, Hell.

Tennessee Williams remained by his own plan a "fugitive kind," but unlike the Fugitive poets who preceded him, he had nowhere to call home. Williams never offered us a vision of the world as it should be; his plays chronicled his homeless flight. As Williams said, the South was "fast becoming a memory," and his nostalgia found a metaphor in menopausal hysteria. Blanche Dubois and Amanda Wingfield are his best characterizations of this yearning for a better time when frail creatures were not tortured by "meaningless cruelty."

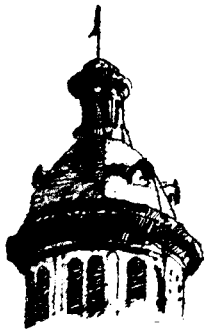
The achievement of Tennessee Williams defies easy analysis. He won Pulitzer Prizes and suffered a long dry maturity in critical disfavor. At their best, his plays were soaring lyric poetry rich with the sound of words. Tennessee Williams never wrote like we Southerners actually speak; he wrote like we sometimes think we sound. The themes of his plays were isolation, longing, sex, power and death. When Williams failed, he failed mightily, in part because he attempted to expand the boundaries of his art even as his powers declined. One quality in his writing never waned —the uneasy laughter at this world's vanity. The sure testament to his Southern roots is that we could understand his jokes and he, ours.

The real measure of Williams' achievement is that one cannot image the American stage devoid of "The Glass Managerie," "A Streetcar Named Desire," "Summer and Smoke," "The Rose Tattoo," "Suddenly, Last Summer," "Camino Real," "Sweet Bird of Youth" and "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof." Moreover, one can hardly conceive of a world where we could not count among its inhabitants, Amanda and Laura Wingfield, Stanley Kowalski, Blanche Dubois, Maggie the Cat and Big Daddy.

The tragedy is that Tennessee Williams never felt a sense of community. He flourished and then decayed in the North. Ironically, when Williams retreated south, seeking a haven from artistic defeat, he found an old battleground of bitter memories. One can only regret that Williams never discovered the sense of community that he so desperately needed. If he had found his sense of place in the South, we might have overheard the following dramatic exchange upon the news of Williams' death:

Miss Lily: Wasn't that terrible what happened to Mr. Williams?
Miss Rose: A real shock. I never thought of him dying.
Miss Lily: And wasn't his death odd?
Miss Rose: Just like he had written it himself.
Miss Lily: He did write some queer plays.
Miss Rose: I'd just as soon he had spared some of the details.
Miss Lily: He sure didn't make us look good down here.
Miss Rose: I think the word is sordid, but if he kept just one Yankee from moving South, it was worth it.

—Harry Woelfel



REPORT FROM THE CAPITOLS

A Bad Actor

COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA—"He sounds, looks but isn't Southern orthodox." That's what *Washington Post* columnist Edwin Yoder had to say about South Carolina Senator Ernest Hollings.

Yoder intended the remark as a compliment to Hollings —a way of assuring voters outside the South that they could support Hollings for the presidency because he's not *really* Southern; he only sounds that way. Actually Hollings sounds more like a bad actor on a Shake and Bake commercial and his leftish political pronouncements blend right in with the dulcet twitterings of the growing flock of loons now seeking the presidency.

Jimmy Carter was able to collect most of the Southern vote by virtue of attending the Baptist Church of Plains on Sunday, then spending the rest of his time wooing the northeast. It remains to be seen whether Fritz Hollings can gain the support of his native region by preaching ultra-liberal politics with a bad Southern accent.

Educating the Masses

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Ironies abound in the tabernacles of government that rise along the Potomac. In a city based on compromise, winners spend a lot of time wondering what it is, exactly, that they won; and losers are forever scrambling for more ground.

So it is with the United States Department of Education. Remember the 1980 campaign? Our hero was on the stand pledging to abolish that Carter-created bureaucratic monstrosity, the Department of Education. And that was music, in particular, to Southern ears, since our region has been the unique object of federal meddling.

Once elected, the man Reagan appointed to head Education was Terrel H. Bell, himself a product of the public education establishment, a rabidly anti-Reagan constituent. From all indications, Bell is engaged in a covert effort to strengthen and entrench the department that Reagan pledged to dismantle. A case in point: The recent shake-up at the NIE (National Institute of Education) which is the arm of the Department charged with long-range policy development in education.

Soon after the election, Reagan appointed Ed Curran to direct NIE with express orders to revamp the Institute. Curran, a conservative from the private sector, was appalled to discover that NIE had been handing out grants to liberal applicants with all the discretion of a drunken sailor on a Saturday night. Curran wrote a now famous letter suggesting the immediate abolition of NIE. The letter was intercepted by the omnipresent Jim Baker. Bell was informed. Curran was fired.

Next chapter: The obvious choice to replace Curran was his deputy Robert Sweet, another conservative Reaganite. Instead Bell picked Manuel Justiz, Ph.D.—a man whose achievements in education included the development of an apparently effective course on "Federal Grantsmanship."

Meanwhile, conservative college president George Roche, who Reagan had appointed chairman of the NIE Presidential Governing Council, offered Sweet the position of staff director. Bell was furious and began seeking the support of Congressional liberals to have the Roche Council abolished. Predictably, the White House engineered a compromise by transferring Sweet to the White House staff.

And so it goes in the Baker-dominated Reagan White House. Long-time Reaganites keep wondering how they somehow won the election but lost the government, while the cagier liberal Republicans keep their teeth sharpened for the next round of bureaucratic infighting.

Meanwhile, the Department of Education survives it all, spinning out new regulations, writing memos, giving away money and making a mockery of the Democratic process.

Don't Play It Again, Sam

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Former North Carolina Senator Sam Ervin is an outstanding constitutional authority from the South. He argued forcefully and truthfully against constitutional monstrosities like the so-called "Voting Rights Act" and the "Equal Rights Amendment."

But dear old Sam has been known to go overboard. During the Watergate hearings, for example, Ervin blurted out into the TV lights that Watergate was the worst evil in American government in 200 years, "a greater evil than the War Between The States." In fact, as a senior editor of *The Southern Partisan* put it recently, Watergate probably wasn't the worst thing Nixon did that day. But never mind that, we're talking about Ervin and his famous lapses.

One such lapse occurred recently when Senator Sam agreed to participate in a rump commemoration of the birth of James Madison, sponsored by secular roots of the American Political System." Senator Ervin was to be there, along side that philosophical loony tunesian, Lowell Weicker. At the last moment, Ervin pulled out for personal reasons and sent along his paper to be read *en absentia*. But the event gained undeserved dignity by association with his name. Sadly, the transaction went both ways. His name also lost dignity because of it.

—P.G.T. Hampton

Is The Battle Over... Or Has It Just Begun?

Richard Weaver died April 3, 1963. He was a teacher, philosopher and warrior on the battlefield of ideas. Senior Editor Landess reminds us that most of all Weaver was a Southerner whose words, after twenty years, still have the pure ring of truth.

The image of Richard Weaver that sticks in my memory is a disturbing one. He is standing before an audience in a conference room at Vanderbilt University, his gnome-like features barely rising above the tall, polished oak podium that holds his manuscript. He wears a brown, wrinkled suit, shiny at the elbows; and at midmorning he is already in need of a second shave.

Slightly nervous, he reads in an accent that is decidedly east Tennessee or western North Carolina; for despite his education and his years at The University of Chicago, he is still a mountain man, with a nasal twang and hard R's that sometimes sound more Midwestern than deep South. Because he is straining, his voice becomes almost shrill against a background of nearby crashing and shouting. The audience leans forward, cupping their ears, trying to make out his words above the racket.

For outside a wrecking crew is demolishing a neighboring building, and it is with this terrible confusion that Weaver is attempting to compete. He is trying to tell his listeners that the South, more than any other region, honors and preserves its past, that for this reason its poets and novelists have been able to draw on a tradition that is still vital and whole, despite the march of modernism with its idolatry of science and its commitment to the idea of progress.

But no one can hear him. The walls are trembling. The ground is shaking. The workmen are shouting. They are tearing down Kissam Hall, where all the Fugitive-Agrarians lived during their formative years, as did many generations of other Vanderbilt alumni. But the building is old, its architecture offensive to modern sensibilities; and Chancellor Harvie Branscomb—a great believer in progress—has commissioned the university architects to design a quadrangle of crackerbox dormitories to replace Kissam Hall. The quadrangle, according to the Chancellor, will be "approximately the dimensions of Harvard Yard."

Weaver, realizing that he is fighting a losing battle with the wrecking crew, begins to shuffle through the pages of his talk, skipping huge sections in order to bring the ordeal to a speedy conclusion. Someone from the Vanderbilt English Department rises and slips quietly out of the door, determined to stop the noise. After a couple of minutes he returns and shakes his head. The workmen have to follow a rigid schedule. They have their orders. The roaring and crashing continue. Finally, in a clatter of crumbling bricks, Weaver finishes his paper and the audience gives him a great burst of applause that for a moment drowns out the noise of the wrecking crew. When the crowd files out the door they see that Kissam Hall is now nothing more than a heap of dust-clouded bricks with a few sections from a marble archway jutting out above the rubble.

The larger battle that Richard Weaver was waging is by no means won. Indeed I would suggest that the outcome is still very much in the balance...

As I say, this is a disturbing memory, partially because Weaver, a shy and modest man, found the chore of a public performance even more difficult than usual, but mostly because of the eerie symbolism of the occasion. The events outside the window mocked everything that Weaver was saying that day, and they did so at the direction of a man who opposed most of what Weaver and the Agrarians stood for, only the latest in a succession of chancellors who believed in modernism and the sanctity of scientific progress.

That was twenty-five years ago, however, and while the campus of Vanderbilt University has grown more unsightly with the years, the intellectual landscape has altered ever so slightly in Weaver's favor. The critics who scoffed at the dire predictions in *I'll Take My Stand* have grown silent as one by one the prophecies have been fulfilled. Fewer and fewer Americans trust the efficacy of science today, and if you ask young people if they believe the world is getting better and better they will tell you they don't think so.

Yet the larger battle that Richard Weaver was waging is by no means won. Indeed I would suggest that the outcome is still very much in the balance, with no clear sign that truth will win in the near future. For Weaver, more than any other twentieth-century Southerner, saw the struggle as a clash between right reason on the one hand and nonreason or ideology on the other. He saw the breakdown of Western civilization not as the consequence of industrialism and technology (these too are consequences) but rather as the result of faulty thinking—if not the absence of thought altogether; and in the course of exploring this conviction Weaver wrote a number of important books and essays, three of which, it seems to me, are seminal studies.

These three works—*Ideas Have Consequences, The Ethics of Rhetoric* and *The Southern Tradition at Bay*—lay important groundwork, awaiting the hand of a master builder, someone with philosophic insights commensurate with Weaver's to come along and pull the parts together, to oversee the Restoration. These books, I hasten to say, are not Kantian in their depth and complexity. To the contrary, they are deceptively simple, available to any intelligent reader who is willing to devote time and thought to their arguments. Together they tell us precisely who we are at a moment in our history when most of us have forgotten, and for this reason alone they require close and respectful reading.

The first of these, *Ideas Have Consequences*, was published in 1948, at a time when Americans were in no mood for jeremiads. In the aftermath of a military victory over European fascism they were pleased with what they had become. Yet Weaver was saying that this nation in particular stood on the edge of the abyss.

As a consequence his study went unnoticed in the academy because it did not fit easily into the dialectic of the times and therefore did not lend itself to glib paraphrase. Thrity-five years later *Ideas Have Consequences* still demands a fuller discussion than anyone would stand still for, but its meaning is probably clearer now than in 1948 since the problems Weaver was addressing are more apparent and more crucial. Also, a number of important voices have been heard from since that time, voices that echo Weaver's language and ideas, giving them a new currency in the intellectual marketplace, rendering them ever more intelligible to the average reader.

Of course his initial premise still proves a formidable obstacle to most. He wants to argue that the structure and

texture of twentieth-century life can be traced to a philosophical controversy in the 14th century, and most people who read, yea, even the *New York Times*, have difficulty thinking about any time so remote as the administration of Calvin Coolidge. Yet Weaver asks them to believe that the "nominalism" of William of Occam contained the seeds of modern chaos. The proposition called "Occam's Razor" (*Entities are not to be multiplied except as may be necessary*) attacks the idea that an absolute universal truth exists against which all our experience must be measured. Thus for Occam, and for all his descendants, such categories as "tree" and "human being" and "evil" are merely convenient ways of talking about the world, but they don't correspond to anything that is real or ultimately true. As Weaver puts it, "The practical result of nominalist philosophy is to banish the reality which is perceived by the intellect and to posit as reality that which is perceived by the senses." The result is a gradual decline of belief in the transcendent and the emergence of modern materialism and moral relativism.

A devastating polemic, irresistible in its flashes of pure logic and its precise use of evidence.

At first Weaver doesn't really attempt to prove this proposition as a philosopher would, at least not through the rigid application of logic to a well-developed abstract argument. He simply states his convictions in the introductory chapter and then glosses them in enough detail throughout the book so that the reader will know finally with what he is being asked to agree; so the "proof" comes in the body of this beautifully-structured book and is cumulative in its rhetorical force. Read to its conclusion, *Ideas Have Consequences* is a devastating polemic, irresistible in its flashes of pure logic and its precise use of evidence.

Although the work is a defense of right reason, Weaver is no narrow rationalist. He makes it clear from the outset that reason itself is not the ultimate source of wisdom but rather sentiment, "an intuitive feeling about the imminent nature of reality." Reason, he points out, is not self-justifying. If one affirms its validity one does so acknowledging a prior commitment to the reasonable nature of reality, to what he calls "the metaphysical dream."

It is this "dream," a belief in transcendence, which has always characterized Western thought and informed its communities, a commitment to the dominion of an ultimate truth under which all other truths are organized and from which they take their meaning. Assuming the existence of those "things unseen" which give form and validity to "things seen," Weaver goes on to draw a conclusion that is unsettling to most twentieth-century sensibilities. He says that a belief in transcendence implies a commitment to political and social hierarchy and a consequent rejection of the egalitarianism that has more and more become the shibboleth of our age. If knowledge and virtue are attributes of the transcendent, he argues, then in choosing their leaders the electorate should seek out these qualities, which all men do not possess equally. The only purely democratic process, he suggests, would be government by lot, since any elective system is based on the implicit but logical idea that some people are better qualified to rule than others.

In discussing this point he has a few words to say about socialism, a Tag he uses without apology. Here he shows his rhetorical teeth by terming the Marxists an outgrowth of what they most despise—the middle class, which Weaver describes as "risking little, terrified by change, its aim . . . to establish a materialistic civilization which will banish threats to its complacency." "The goal of social democracy," he says scornfully, "is scientific feeding."

Though Weaver makes it quite clear that he believes in the idea of equality under the law, he says that other kinds of egalitarianism which attempt to subvert natural authority merely want to substitute a bureaucratic hierarchy for the government that Jefferson envisioned, a hierarchy of "gifts and attainments." This segment of Weaver's essay probably seemed more outrageous and less credible three decades ago than it does today, when the tyranny of a federal bureaucracy is beginning to intimidate even those who formerly urged its omnipotence (writers for the *New Republic* now openly complain about the U.S. Postal Service). Still even

Here he is on his own, no longer apprentice to the Agrarians, an accomplished master ready to do things that Ransom, Davidson, and Tate could not do so well, if at all.

in the 1980's Weaver's attack on egalitarianism constitutes an implicit scandal to Americans as a whole, who have almost forgotten the formidable limitations the Founding Fathers placed on the conduct of American democracy.

Another dire consequence of egalitarianism, says Weaver, is the fragmentation of modern society into specialists who revere their own isolated roles in a world they regard as economic but who have no understanding of the community as a whole, much less the truths that once undergirded it. Knowledge of the whole of Creation was the aspiration of the medieval "philosophic doctor" and his successor, the renaissance gentleman; but in more recent times the so-called "expert" is so obsessed with his own fragment of the puzzle that he stands on the borderline of psychosis. Or so Weaver argues, echoing the sentiments of T.S. Eliot, Allen Tate, John Crowe Ransom and a number of other literary critics who took up this problem in an effort to explain the plight of the modern poet in a technocratic society that no longer has use for his wisdom.

Weaver also considers the situation of modern artists and artisans, demonstrating that labor of any sort in contemporary society is regarded as a necessary evil, whereas in earlier times, with some transcendent idea of what work should accomplish, people took pride in their craftsmanship; for, as he puts it, "to labor is to pray, for conscientious effort to realize an ideal is a kind of fidelity." Again, it is the ideal, the transcendent, that gives meaning and dignity to everyday life. Thus, with the modern rejection of universal truth, even the daily activity of life-sustaining labor is rendered dull and meaningless, merely a means to material self-gratification. The result: built-in obsolescence and undisciplined art.

Turning to the popular press, Weaver argues that the counterfeit vision of the "media" (not his word) is distorted and simplistic in order to bring the public into easy conformity with current orthodoxy. Summarizing his opinion Weaver writes, "How . . . can one hesitate to conclude that we would live in greater peace and enjoy sounder moral health if the institution of the newspaper were abolished entirely?" His only optimistic observation is that despite persistent and dishonest opposition from the press, right-minded politicians are still elected to public office and skepticism is widening, even among uneducated people, as to the credibility of the media.

And what kind of society do the falsifiers of truth depict for Americans to admire? Weaver concludes that we are urged to be spoiled children, addicted to comfort and incapable of any heroic sacrifice, a generation of undisciplined egotists who are less and less willing to work for the plethora of material goods our leaders tell us we deserve. In addition, he points out that, driven by envy and bewildered by the presence of unequal wealth when he cannot admit unequal merit, modern man moves to take away the property of others with the fallacious argument that "property rights should not be allowed to stand in the way of human rights."

It is important to note here that Weaver considers property to be "the last metaphysical right" upon which other rights depend, and he does so not out of any deep-seated conviction that the free-market economy is superior to collectivism or that capitalism is the salvation of the West, but out of a reasonable assumption about the essential nature of freedom and man's capacity to act morally when he is owned outright by some impersonal social institution, however benevolently conceived. Here and only here does Weaver's traditionalism strike a sort of accommodation with the economic conservatives of the Northeast. The rest of the time they stand beyond the pale of his philosophy and are often the enemy, particularly when they smack of social Darwinism.

When the crowd files out the door they see that Kissam Hall is now nothing more than a heap of dust-clouded bricks with a few sections from a marble archway jutting out above the rubble.

In the final analysis, what Weaver defends in this brilliant study is something as simple and elusive as truth, the kind of truth that men once believed in as a matter of course, even when they disagreed about its nature. But truth requires property to defend it; piety towards nature, neighbors, the past to nurture it; and a renewed respect for language to reveal it and to render it compelling. This truth is the tenuous thread he offers as a means to escape from the labyrinthine modernity that he has defined for us all too well.

Like *Ideas Have Consequences, The Ethics of Rhetoric* is one of those small books that has the power to alter the thinking of an entire generation. Unfortunately, it hasn't done so, largely, I suspect, because too many people believe it is for specialists in linguistic studies. And indeed two or three chapters are so restricted in their focus that they may be of no more than passing interest to the general reader. But the book as a whole is not about language alone but about social and political truths, about the ultimate realities which stand behind words and inform the structure of Being itself. In fact, of all Weaver's works I find this one the most original and incisive. Here he is on his own, no longer apprentice to the Agrarians, an accomplished master ready to do things that Ransom, Davidson, and Tate could not do so well, if at all.

The book begins with a commentary on Plato's *Phaedrus* that serves as a framework for the essays that follow, defining for the reader the way in which the persuasive user of language, the *rhetor*, must approach words in order to be morally worthy of his task. I am not thoroughly familiar with the scholarship, but I suspect that this interpretation of Plato's famous dialogue (which is ostensibly about love rather than language) is one of the most original essays ever written on the Greek philosopher. Yet Weaver is surely right when he argues that Plato's two kinds of lovers—the selfish lover and the unselfish lover—are intended to be

seen as rhetors who approach language, the object of their affection, with a desire either to exploit it for their own ends or else to serve the ultimate truth that language, at its best, reveals.

The false lover (rhetor) is the Sophist, who still uses any means to achieve his ends. He does not believe that the truth exists, so the manner in which he manipulates grammar, logic, and rhetoric is subject to no external restrictions, such as those of moral conscience. He therefore feels free to say anything that will help him possess what he most yearns after. He strives to use the beloved for his own gratification rather than to love for the beloved's sake. The Greek word for such love is "eros"; the English word is "lust." And such love is radically self-centered and finally immoral, since it grows out of a total disregard for the sanctity of the beloved, which, in Weaver's argument, is ultimate truth.

The true lover (rhetor), on the other hand, believes in the infinite worth of the beloved and will therefore use language in such a way as to reveal this worth rather than to distort or abuse it. This lover will not violate the sanctity of the beloved, will not falsify logic and language in order to achieve his ends; for he wants to be servant rather than master. Such love in the Greek is called "agape," and in older English usage was "charity," though significantly the distinction between "eros" and "agape" is impossible to make in our contemporary diction.

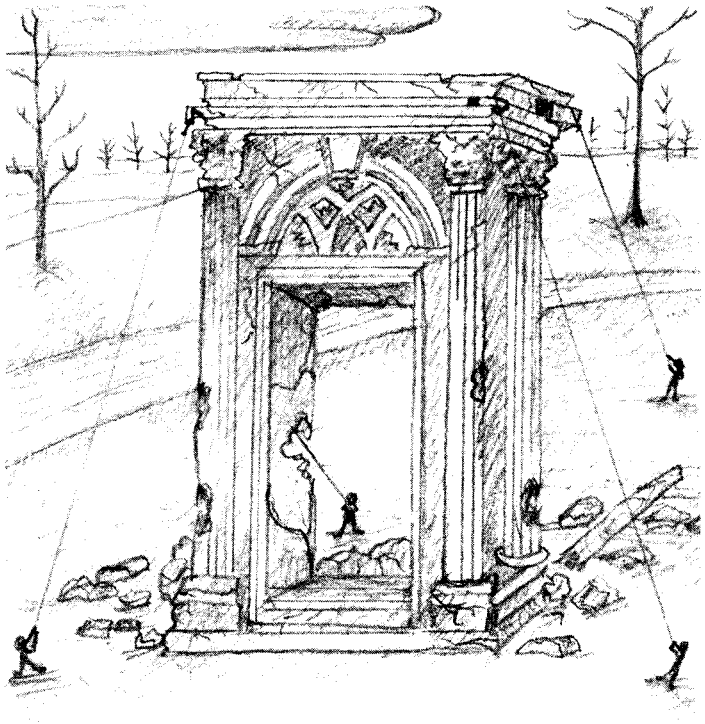
What Weaver is attacking in this essay is the loose morality that lies behind such modern rhetors as advertising copy writers and ambitious politicians, who will say anything in order to sell their product or to be elected to office. If such people know about logic at all they use their knowledge to deceive members of their audience rather than to enlighten them. In fact, the advertisements in magazines and on television offer prime classroom examples of fallacious reasoning to the few college professors who still teach courses in formal logic; and the next best source for such negative examples is political discourse, not excluding the rhetoric found on the front pages of newspapers and in the CBS Evening News, Dan Rather reporting.

Weaver's commendation of the true lover, the rhetor, is no more than a plea for integrity in a world where the loss of any sense of transcendence has turned the human community into a rhetorical jungle. In making this plea he realizes that the traditional values he admires and advocates can survive and prosper only in a climate of respect for truth, whereas the values of modernism will wither and die under the severe scrutiny of an honest language.

If this essay is the most original and broad-ranging in the collection, Weaver's discussion of the Scopes trial is perhaps the most dramatic. Anyone who has seen *Inherit the Wind* or read retrospective accounts of the famous showdown at Dayton must think that Clarence Darrow was a quiet defender of justice while William Jennings Bryan was a blustering fool. They must also have concluded that Scope's conviction was one of those mean and arbitrary judgments that are sometimes handed down in rural courts when simple people get their backs up and refuse out of prejudice to do what the law prescribes. To everyone who has accepted this interpretation of the events at Dayton, Weaver offers a devastating rebuttal, one that no honest observer could seriously quarrel with, so carefully mustered is his evidence.

In the first place, it seems that Bryan was by no means a fool in the conduct of the trial—at least not *all* the time. His famous attempt to defend Biblical literalism was, of course, ludicrous, even to those intelligent men who agreed with him on the subject. But, as Weaver points out, the question of Biblical or scientific truth should never have been at issue in the first place, that Bryan understood this point, and that he eloquently argued as much to the judge, who erred in failing to restrict the testimony to matters of legal relevance. In quoting extensively from the transcript of the trial, Weaver demonstrates beyond reasonable doubt that at one stage of the proceedings it was Bryan rather than Darrow who was the masterful logician and that he all but won the legal case before he ever took the stand to talk about Adam and Noah and the Whale.

In the first place, as Bryan argued (and as Weaver affirms), the wisdom of the Tennessee law forbidding the teaching of *any* creation theory (whether scientific *or Biblical*) was not an issue to bring before the court. It was, instead, a matter properly addressed in the legislature, where such laws, according to the federal and state constitutions, are to be debated and either passed or rejected. If the law is unwise, Bryan argued, then it should be repealed. But once passed, it has to be obeyed, unless one wants to argue that the people of a state, who pay for the establishment of public schools through their taxes, have no right to say what subjects are to be taught there—a proposition patently absurd. You couldn't simply claim that because a few self-appointed experts say that the theory of evolution should be taught, the courts can presume to set aside the judgment of the people of the state.



Darrow, of course, called to his aid a number of expert witnesses who argued the truth of evolution as an "accepted fact." Bryan, however, countered by saying that the truth or falsity of evolution was finally irrelevant, since a number of truths and facts were not taught in the public schools for one reason or another.

In discussing this exchange Weaver points out that the truth of evolution was by no means a "fact," as Darrow and his experts argued, but something two times removed from fact. A fact, he says, is a verifiable entity in time and space. To suggest that facts have a relationship to one another, as Darwin does, is to express an opinion about fact. To say that this opinion is true is to express an opinion about an opinion about a fact, a distinction that Bryan seemed better able to make than Darrow, who wanted to argue that the state of Tennessee had no right to suppress "truth," whatever the social consequences.

At this point Bryan delivered what should have been the *coup de grace* in an exchange you can bet Mencken never reported. He pointed out that Darrow—who now maintained that the state had no right to omit the theory of evolution from its curriculum—had only recently defended Leopold and Loeb on precisely the opposite grounds. The community, Darrow had argued in Illinois, was partially to blame for the "thrill murder" of a young boy by two college students. And why? Because these killers had been inspired to commit their cold-blooded act by the writings of Nietsche, *which they found in the public library.* If the public allows such dangerous ideas to be broadcast, Darrow had thundered, then how can they hold these young impressionable students entirely to blame for what they did.

Bryan quickly pointed out the horrid inconsistency of Darrow's argument in Illinois and his argument in Tennessee; and he was not too foolish or too senile to note that Nietsche's theory was based in some measure on the theory of evolution, which Darrow now wanted to say was undeniably true and therefore could not be banned from the curriculum of Tennessee schools.

To many of us who have made a career of studying language this book is awesome and moving... Alone it could stand as the achievement of a lifetime...

In Weaver's account we see a Bryan and a Darrow hithertofore hidden from the public eye. Instead of the doddering old bigot we find the aging orator who still has a few arrows left in his quiver, the great champion of the people who makes one last stand for their rights, this time in the face of a new breed of technocrats who want to control education without any interference from those who establish and pay for it. Darrow, on the other hand, is no longer quite the doughty defender of truth but rather a seedy sentimentalist who uses his rhetorical powers first on one side and then the other, wherever whim or fame or the Almighty Dollar beckons. And the contrast between the two illustrates precisely the thesis that Weaver explores in *Ideas Have Consequences*: that those who believe in truth are better able to make distinctions than those who argue from the gut of their own egos.

The young street politicians of our day have yet to see the connection between a sinister technology and the ills of widespread urbanization, something that Weaver makes explicit in this volume...

Turning from Bryan and Darrow, he takes up Abraham Lincoln and Edmund Burke, and here I have a problem with his perspective. If he errs at all in this volume it is in his love for what he calls "the argument from definition," a deductive approach that deals in abstract principles rather than in particulars of the concrete world. In contrast to the argument from definition he cites the "argument from circumstance," an inductive approach that draws on the particularities surrounding an issue without significant reference to abstract truth. I will say more about this blind spot later, though I don't believe it is crucial to an understanding of Weaver's thought as a whole. At this point suffice it to say that he chooses Lincoln to illustrate the argument from definition and Burke for the argument from circumstance, questionable choices, I think, though Weaver's illustrative passages are convincing enough.

Since Weaver himself is a believer in the validity of ultimate definitions, why should he choose Abraham Lincoln for his model of this method, Lincoln was among the most pragmatic abusers of legal definition in his unrestrained efforts to save the Union? On the other hand, why should Weaver—a traditionalist by temperament—choose a like-minded thinker, Edmund Burke, to illustrate what he considers the "lower road" in formal argument (though a permissible one)?

I don't know the answer to these questions, but I suspect that he adopted this strategem because he knew his audience and concluded that if he hoped to make any impact on their modern, secular sensibilities he would have to do so by shocking them into some new understanding of the nature of rhetoric. "To those of you who want to argue pragmatically," he may have been saying, "look at your greatest hero, Lincoln, who at his best argues from immutable principle. On the other hand, look at Burke, whose philosophy you despise, and see how often he argues the way you do. Which would you rather emulate? And are you not now ready to reconsider your rejection of the idea of higher truth?"

At worst, this strategy makes a few of us uncomfortable, though we cannot deny the persuasive selection of examples that he places before us. We can only say in reply that Lincoln often argued from circumstance and that Burke argued from definition, though never without some reference to the real world in which all human action takes place. (If I had to choose between the two, I would take Burke and the argument from circumstance; but such a choice would surely be a false dilemma, and Weaver is by no means suggesting that we must be impaled on its horns.)

The other essays in this volume are almost as rewarding as those I have singled out, though perhaps a little less innovative and profound. But all are directly relevant to the idea that rhetoric and thought go hand in hand and that together they constitute the most vital informing force in the political order. To many of us who have made a career of studying language this book is awesome and moving, the only one of Weaver's studies, it seems to me, that gives us the full measure of his quiet and impregnable genius. Alone it could stand as the achievement of a lifetime—and one that would bid fair to have a perennial and curative effect on the scholarly community.

The Southern Tradition at Bay, though published posthumously in 1968, was written over twenty-five years earlier as a doctoral dissertation and then revised later for publication. Significantly Cleanth Brooks was "Chairman of the Examining Committee' and both Robert Penn Warren and John Crowe Ransom receive thanks in Weaver's original preface. But written acknowledgement of his debt is unnecessary, because the text itself amply reveals the degree to which his thought is an extension of Agrarianism. Indeed the published version of this study could be regarded as a formal and scholarly presentation of the arguments made in *I'll Take My Stand* and in other diverse essays of that group during the Thirties.

For one thing, Weaver begins where they began—with an attack on science and technology as "the most powerful force of corruption in our age." Such a statement seems almost commonplace in the 1980's, because what Weaver and the Agrarians were saying a half century ago has now become part of a new and confused leftist orthodoxy so mindless and militant that if one didn't know better, one might be tempted to feel sorry for the military-industrial complex.

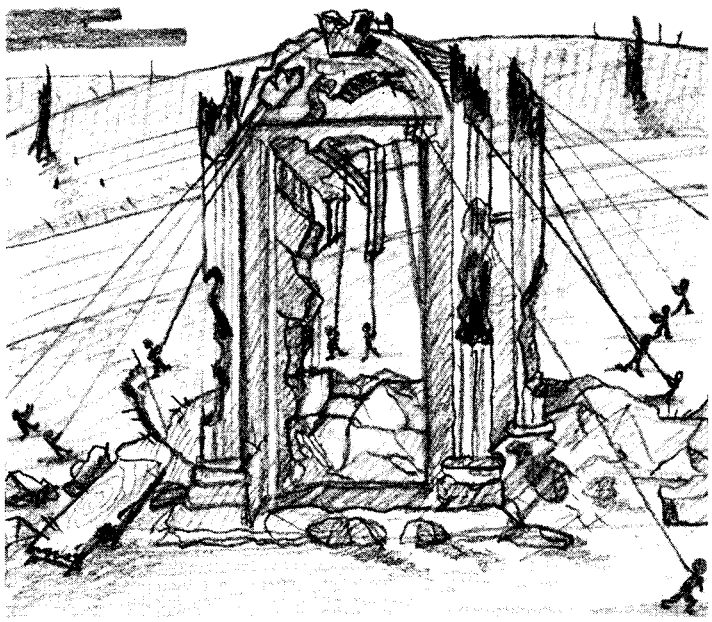
Of course the young street politicians of our day have yet to see the connection between a sinister technology and the ills of widespread urbanization, something that Weaver makes explicit in this volume when he writes, "Man has lost piety toward Nature in proportion as he has left her and shut himself up in cities with rationalism for his philosophy." Against this trend in the nation as a whole, Weaver juxtaposes the South, which, he says, is "alone among the sections . . . in regarding science as a false messiah." Why this statement is true really constitutes the subject of his study as a whole, and he explains in fine and abundant detail the several important characteristics of the modern Southerner's heritage which have fortified him against the assault of modernity.

First, he says, the region from its earliest times subscribed to a "feudal system" patterned after a declining European order. Agricultural in its economic bias, Southern society was hierarchical in structure, with the plantation as the model of the community and each member of the plantation household assuming a definite station and task in the scheme of things. "In the social order which was overthrown by the Civil War," Weaver writes, "there existed a feature of feudalism incomprehensible to the modern mind with its egotism and enlightened selfishness, subordination without envy, and superiority without fear."

Even the Agrarians had not been willing to go so far, and in essay after essay they deny that the South was aristocratic (Weaver says that in some respects it was), and they point most often to the yeoman farmer as a normative figure rather than to the plantation owner. In fact, Weaver does in this study what the Agrarians have been mistakenly accused of doing—offering a militant defense of the Old Regime. And while Weaver is careful to include careful qualifications, in a sense he is the most unreconstructed of them all.

He exhibits this quality most clearly in his brief discussion of the code of chivalry, an important element in the temperament of the Old South which he feels has affected the evolving nature of the region, even into modern times. Without pursuing the matter too vigorously, he calls Southern chivalric notions "a romantic idealism, closely related to Christianity, which makes honor the guiding principle of conduct," and he argues that "it was an institution of strong and, on the whole, good influence," though at least one observer has blamed it for the loss of the War.

His explanation for the appearance of such a tradition is altogether different from that of Mark Twain and a host of latter-day critics who have said that Southerners took too seriously the spirit of what they read in the romances of Sir Walter Scott. The Scott theory is widely accepted, but Weaver's account is down-to-earth, historical, and less



archly literary: "Since chivalry has been one of the main traditions of European civilization," he says, "it was not strange that a chivalric code should develop in the South, which was disposed to accept rather than reject European traditions." Simple enough, and more credible than Twain and his followers, who have never bothered to explain why Southerners would have been attracted to Scott's works in the first place if they had not been *predisposed* to admire the chivalric.

Weaver's discussion of the gentleman and his education is much fuller and considerably more rewarding than his treatment of chivalry, though here again he is cutting against the grain of current mythology. Much has been written in refutation of the idea that Southerners were educated at all, much less that they were given the "humanistic" preparation that Weaver supposes, an education that emphasized "the classic qualities of magnificence, magnanimity, and liberality." Yet Weaver offers numerous examples and convincing glosses; his treatment is more than merely sentimental opinion, which is all the Negative side in this debate can muster.

Weaver does in this study what the Agrarians have been mistakenly accused of doing—offering a militant defense of the Old Regime... in a sense he is the most unreconstructed of them all.

His treatment of Southern religion, like that of the Agrarians, suggests that the region's piety is constant but compromised by "doctrinal innocence"; for, as he says, "the average Southerner knew little and appeared to care less about casuistical theology or the metaphysical underlying all religion—what he recognized was the acknowledgement, the submissiveness of the will, and that general respect for order, natural and institutional, which is piety. A religious solid South preceded the political solid South."

The benefits of such theological laxity, according to Weaver, were a high degree of religious quiescence and a belief among neighbors of various sects that "a certain portion of life must remain inscrutable." He admits, however, that the shortcomings of this attitude are more far-reaching.

For in an epilogue to *The Southern Tradition at Bay* he says that one of the great errors of the South has been "a failure to study its position until it arrived at metaphysical foundations." No Southerner, he argues, "could say why the South was right *finally*," and as a consequence, when the region was attacked by its Puritan enemies, Southerners had nothing to offer in response but impotent and uncontrollable anger. What has always been needed, he says, is a *Summa Theologica*, a comprehensive study of the Southern mind written by a Burke or a Hegel instead of random essays by lawyers and journalists.

On such a *magnum opus*, he says, a new and successful initiative might still be mounted, "one which would give the common man a world view completely different from that which he has constructed out of his random knowledge of science." Such a counteroffensive—which he feels must be carried to the enemy by poets, artists, and intellectuals—would involve remanning "the barricades of revealed Christianity, of humanism, of sentiment," though not, he says, in the name of the Lost Cause, whose final offensive failed in the 1890's with the organization of the United Confederate Veterans and their subsequent failure to attract new recruits from the young. An effective movement, he concludes, must subtly incorporate the values of the past while exploiting the rhetoric of progress and the future.

It is impossible with justice to gloss and praise this substantial volume, which is richer and more complicated than Weaver's other works, though perhaps not so original. As Donald Davidson points out in his introduction to the published edition, Weaver uses every conceivable type of source in examining his subject—political, literary, personal, public—and he does so with careful attention to dissenting opinion and to embarrassing exceptions. He is neither unequivocally positive about the character of his region nor naively optimistic about its future. But he does offer something more than tenuous apologies or outright apostasy. He has written a call to battle that we can ignore only at our peril, and he may have written the very work he calls for at the end of his long and rewarding study. Not to consider that possibility is to pay him less homage than he clearly deserves.

Weaver has been dead twenty years now, and he has been missed every single day; but the same old wrecking crew is with us still, tearing down what is old and well-built in order to throw up something modern and transient, their mouths pursed, their worried little eyes blinking nervously. They constantly consult their watches, new ones which they have to press in order to see. They are behind schedule. American society should have been torn down long before now. The foundation for an entirely new economic system was to have been poured last Thursday. And now Reagan is in the White House, which means further delays (though not as many as they once feared). They shout to one another. The bulldozers roar into action. The driver sets down the grade. And they're off in a flurry of endless activity, for they know that you can't destroy a world if you don't keep moving.

The same old wrecking crew is with us still, tearing down what is old and well-built in order to throw up something modern and transient.

At the same time, somewhere in a classroom or library, Richard Weaver through the printed word continues to explain where we have gone wrong and how we can correct

our error. He insists that we have time if we will only proceed with reason and prudence. No one has won or lost anything—at least, not yet.

Indeed Weaver and his mentors, the Agrarians, speak more forcefully in the year 1983 than they did in the Thirties and Forties. Yet some of us who admire and believe them are not sure if they are prophets of a genuine cultural renaissance or the last survivors of an order that has, like all its predecessors, doomed itself to final destruction. It depends on how our day has gone, doesn't it? Or what we read in the morning newspapers. None of us is as certain about things as Weaver was, though he never held out false hopes or underestimated the difficulty of a Restoration.

But of course he brought some strengths to the battle that most of us lack, and I would like to say just a word about them. First, however, in deference to his own argumentative practice, I feel obliged to mention what I consider to be his shortcomings, which are so inconsequential as to warrant no more than a sentence or two.

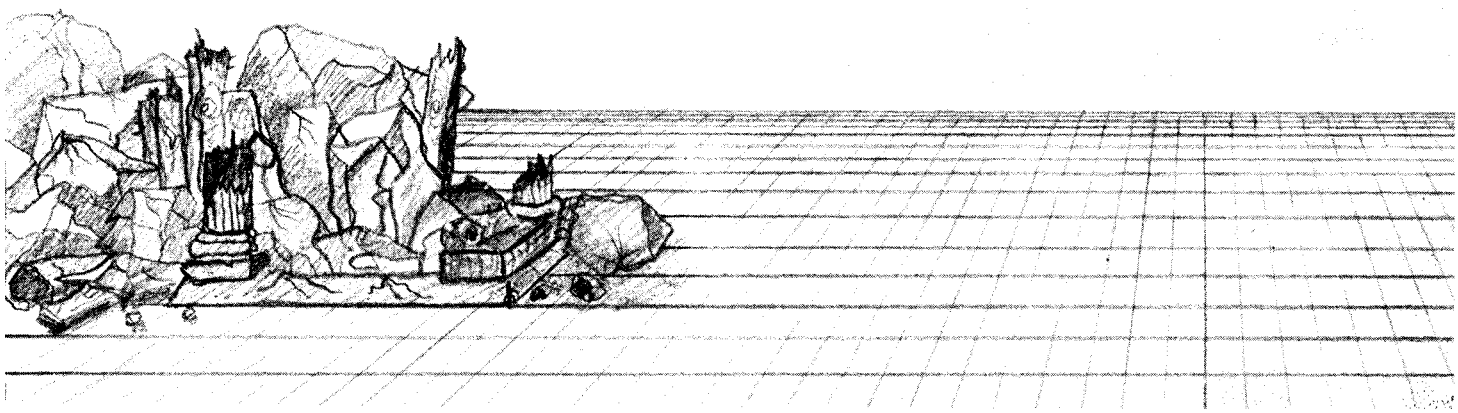
First, it seems to me that he is occasionally just a bit too Platonic to credit the full complexity of human beings and their corporate behavior. He has God the Father (the Mind) well in hand, but from time to time he has a little trouble with the Son and the Holy Spirit. You don't always have a problem solved when you explain it in reasonable terms, and there is a case to be made for a folk wisdom that contributes as much to political understanding as do the Philosopher Kings. Weaver didn't often forget how wise his own uneducated mountain neighbors could be, but he sometimes did. And they would never have been caught using anything but an argument from circumstance, believing, as they did, in the absolute truth of the Incarnation.

Second, like Davidson, Ransom and the early Tate, Weaver thinks and says too little about the Church's role in the definition of western culture—past, present, and future. (Only Brooks and Lytle are sound here.) The medieval certitude he admired was, after all, a characteristic of Christendom, only Platonic by way of St. Augustine and, to a far lesser degree, St. Thomas Aquinas. But it was the body and the soul of the Church as much as its mind that gave order and meaning to the medieval world, and I could not imagine a Restoration of the sort for which Weaver worked that would not have a revitalized Christianity at its center.

Weaver knew these things most of the time and took them into account. In addition, he brought some extraordinary virtues to the great struggles of our age, virtues which the rest of us lack. First, he had a genuinely philosophic mind rather than merely a polemical one. Davidson, the best polemicist in the group, was content to muster his rhetoric for The Cause without probing too deeply into the substratum of meaning that would engage a disinterested student of Western thought. Tate and Lytle delved more profoundly beneath the surface as they ground their axes, polemicists with definite philosophical import. Weaver, however, is always the philosopher first, though he never hesitates to fly his colors and do battle with the enemy. *Ideas Have Consequences*, therefore, has a logical rigor and a formal structure which give the work an air of authority that it would lack as a mere essay of opinion.

Then, too, Weaver had a rugged honesty about him that made his writings both ingenuous and intimidating. At times he was almost blunt in his statements about such controversial issues as equality, freedom, and the press. Where his logic led him he followed, and when he came to an unpopular conclusion he was not afraid to state it plainly, the way mountain people generally do. He could muster rhetoric for every legitimate purpose, but he never used it to mitigate or conceal truth in order to placate the spirit of the age. The rest of us, for the most part, lack his courage, and as a consequence fall short of his strength and power.

Finally, he generated an aura of absolute faith in all that he wrote and said. By the time he finished *The Southern Tradition at Bay* he had put socialism behind him, reordered his thinking, and come to a final accommodation with the world. And while he changed his mind about some matters in later years, he never gave an inch on the fundamentals. For this reason you can read his works—each quite different in concept and focus—and know that he was the same man at the end that he was when, late in life, he came over to the losing side and took his station beside a ragged and beleaguered band of defenders. Before Ransom, Davidson and the rest he was taken; and we are left with his indispensible legacy of thought and with the challenge of a life lived in service to a splendid vision of order that no crew of sleek upstarts can ever tear down. ⊠



The Early Culture

The American South developed historically from a strong mixture of Celtic and Anglo-Saxon influences. In fact, we derive our strong sense of community from the old Norse tradition of community where happiness (or "glee") is defined by fellowship with one's community and the darkest evil defined by the isolation and loneliness of being cut off from that fellowship.

One of the most famous Anglo-Saxon poems still surviving is translated and adapted here for us by Rhea Thomas Workman, Professor Emeritus at Columbia College.

THE DREAM OF THE ROOD

Translated and adapted from the Anglo-Saxon by Rhea Thomas Workman

NOTE: In the early Christian generations, the crucifixion of Christ was much less emphasized than, first His Baptism, and somewhat later, His Conception and Birth. By the end of the third century, with the development of the doctrine of Salvation, came an understanding of the crucial importance of the death of Christ prior to resurrection. By dying, Christ was then able to preach to all those confined in the Kingdom of Death, and to rescue from that Lower Region those who accepted Him as the Son of God, creating a new link between each believing soul and God through all time. The atonement for original sin was thereby made complete.

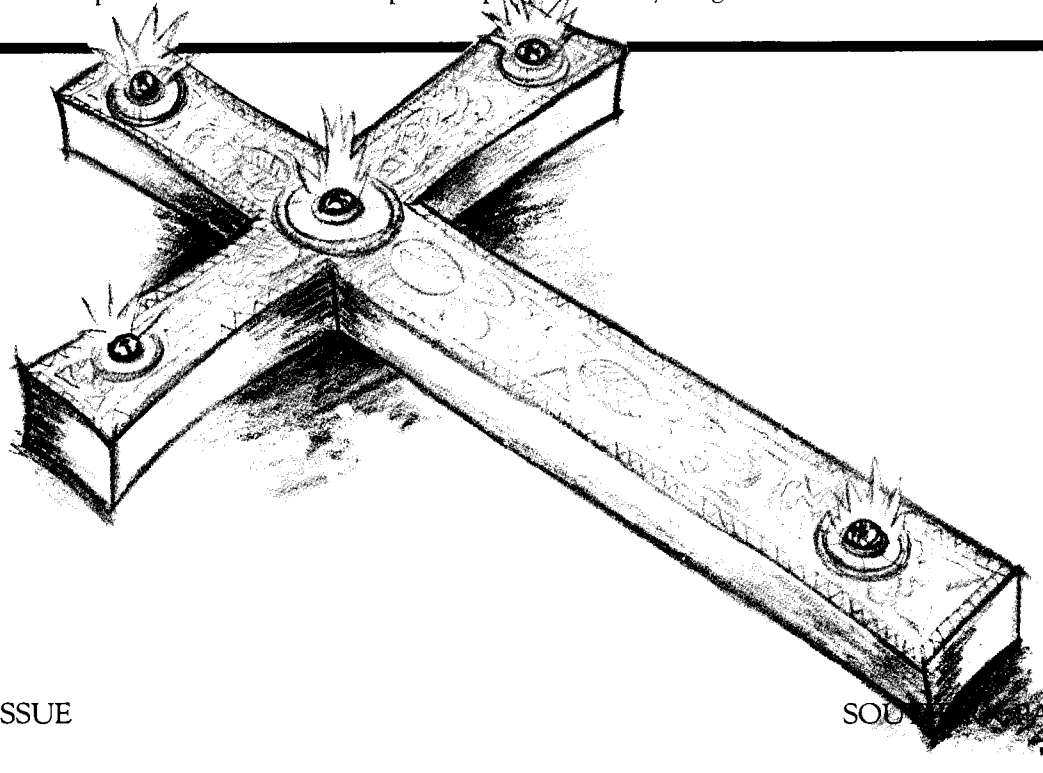
This poem was written, according to scholarly concensus, about AD 800, somewhere in northeastern England, by a lonely monk of Anglo-Saxon culture and Christian commitment.

A few comments on the words: *dream* may mean either the literal "dream" or "joy," and *rood* is the ancestor of the modern English "rod," as a long piece of wood or metal. This came to mean, in Christian images, the *Rood* or *Cross* of Christ. Ecclesiastical usage today retains references to a cathedral's "Rood" (a large crucifix above the entrance to the cathedral crossing), or "rood-screen," separating the choir and apse from the nave.

This translation generally follows the form of Anglo-Saxon poetry: each line is divided into two half-lines, marked by a space indicating a pause. Each half-line has two stressed syllables, at least one of which in the first half-line alliterates with at least one stressed syllable in the second half-line.

As a Christian symbol, the Cross speaks in any language—a fitting selection for Eastertide, which ends with Pentecost, when the apostles were enabled to speak to people in many tongues—a reversal of the Tower of Babel.

—RTW



LO! I will declare the dearest of dreams,
which came to me, moody at midnight,
the silent time when no man spoke!

Methought that I looked at a towering tree
rising aloft all wreathed with light,
the brightest of cross-beams, a shining symbol
gilded with gold. And sparks glimmered bright
upon the face of the earth, for put on the cross-piece
were five fair rubies, blood-red—
for there had bled the wounded Son of God—
and toward Him had yearned the Holy Host,
and the men of the earth, the Creation, and all.
This was no gallows of guilt, but a glorious Victory-Cross—
and I, stained with sins, and wrapped with wickedness,
I saw that wondrous tree
garnished with gold and joyful gems.

Yet through that gold I could see sorrow,
the red sweat of sorrow washed on its side.
Then these words the holy wood spoke:
"It was years ago (I mind it well)
that I was felled at the forest-edge,
ripped from my roots. Cruel hands gripped me,
heaved me high on a hill
and made me a frame for felons.

Saw I then the Master of Mankind
as they lashed Him to hasten His mounting up on me.
In God's Name I yearned to break and burst,
but God spoke, and steady I stood—
I could not fell those foes against God's word.

Then the young Hero (that was God Almighty),
strong and stern-minded, stripped Himself.
The gallant One stepped on the steep gallows
(as the world stared) to redeem mankind.
When the Hero clasped me, I trembled—
but I held aloft the Holy King—
I dared not stoop.

Then with dark nails they pierced me—see the raw wounds,
the gaping gashes of hate! They galled us both together.
All besmeared with blood was I, shed from the side of the Man.
Then did black shadows swallow the fair corpse,
deliver to darkness His dear body.
All the world wept—
Christ hung heavy on the Cross.

Pierced the spikes sorely where they thrust through me,
but when the time came, humbly I bowed
for the Lord to be lifted down from his deadly doom.

They laid Him low, looked at Him long,
then hollowed a holy tomb from the stone
and put Him at rest, sad in the sunset,
then left Him alone, the limb-weary Lord.

Yet for a dark space stood three of us there,
ghastly gallows bedabbled with blood,
until sharp axes again cut us down
and God's foes buried us in a deep-delved pit.

But even from that pit did the followers of God
raise me again and gild me with glittering gold,
and put on my cross-piece five rubies, blood-red—
for, stretched on my frame for the good of mankind,
for the sins of mankind and the old deeds of Adam,
gladly had suffered the Son of God.

So God honored me beyond all other trees
as the Almighty above all other women
honored His mother, meek and mild.
And now righteous men worship the rood—
all glorious I rise to heal all hate.
Thus I bid thee, dear dreamer,
to tell in warm words thy dream of the rood:

On this cross Christ overcame death—
and deathless He rose to help all men,
and climbed to high heaven by the glory of God.
Nor need any man fear to taste bitter death
who in his own breast bears the sign of the cross.
He will seek the far land to dwell with the Lord.

Then was I alone, a dreamer alone—
but glad in thought, blithe of heart,
that alone I can pray to the Lord's own Tree.
And now I look for the hallowed Cross
to fetch me hence to the Hero's fair hall
where my faithful friends have gone to glory,
to dwell in bliss in wonder unending.

May the Lord befriend the friendless dreamer!
The Hero of God, Who suffered for men,
with boundless love has bought me from sin
and will bring me to haven in heaven-home!

A PARTISAN CONVERSATION

CLEANTH BROOKS

It was an eight o'clock class, that excruciating hour designed to separate true acolytes from dilettantes. Mr. Cleanth Brooks, co-author of Understanding Poetry, *on which my generation cut its critical teeth, was almost always there in the classroom before the first of us, a short, roundfaced man whose eyes blinked from behind thick lenses and who stooped forward as he walked so that his astonishingly tiny feet seemed always to be trying to catch up to his center of gravity. He was dapper. The leather of his Oxfords shone, his charcoal gray flannels held a knife's edge crease, and his brown, herringbone Harris tweed jacket was cut with the insouciant perfection of the great Ivy League haberdashers. Only his ties were on occasion rebellious, a reminder of the West Tennessean blood that coursed beneath his exquisite manners.*

They distinguished him then as they do today. In that musical Mississippi accent, he revealed to us the disciplines of rhythm, language, and imagery that, when perfectly harnessed, can produce the magic of a poem. In suggesting his reading of, say, a sonnet by Yeats, he shunned any semblance of imposing it. He would begin, "On... the one hand," presenting his view, followed inevitably, by, "On... the o-ther hand," presenting an opposing, or different, view. (As he grew older, we, his ex-students, grinned to hear him begin, "On... the o-ther hand," so tender and scrupulous had he become about the opinions of others.)

He was so fair, his enunciation so gentle, his manner so mild, that one can easily miss the steely analytical faculties that have established Cleanth Brooks as possibly the most rigorous as well as one of the most sensitive of the so-called (he doesn't much cotton to the label) "New Critics."

At Yale, his kindness was legendary: he read all our poetical efforts, spending precious hours in his Davenport College office (ever so gently) criticizing them. Among his greatest contributions to literature may be that he taught most of us so well to distinguish between the good and the not-so-good that clods like myself finally desisted in our assaults on the Muse. If you come upon The Well Wrought Urn, A Shaping Joy, *or his two masterful works on William Faulkner, or, perhaps, a tattered and much marked old copy of* Understanding Poetry, *treat yourself to a revolution—and marvel at the worth of a man who at age 75 is still teaching us that the only intellectually reputable reaction to emotionally tendentious works like* Ode To The West Wind *is a horse laugh.* **—Reid Buckley**

PHOTOGRAPHY AND EDITORIAL ASSISTANCE BY MARK HUNTER.

PARTISAN: How much is the South changing? You have argued that the South has remained unchanged in fundamental ways. I believe you cite John Shelton Reed to support your view that the South enjoys a certain stability in attitude toward family, religion, place and history. In fact, you have suggested that the South is becoming even more different and distinct...

BROOKS: Yes. That's what Reed says. I can't vouch for it, and I'm wary of sociologists generally. But Mr. Reed is one who writes the King's English literately. And he's come up with some surprising conclusions.

Certain things in the South are changing surely. We have to admit to the growth of airports, skyscrapers, Holiday Inns, national advertising, radio and television shows. But Reed claims that, as you burrow down a little beneath those, you will find the more basic differences—differences in attitude, language and custom—these things are actually defining themselves more accurately.

PARTISAN: But you say you're not sure—that you can't vouch for it?

BROOKS: Well, I've sojourned for so long in New England. When I come back, it's like coming home. Yet, many of my Southern friends say, "Oh Cleanth, it's all changing. It's all changing." I think they're wrong. But then, I could be wrong.

PARTISAN: In *The Dispossessed Garden*, Lewis Simpson speaks of the Southern writer's "covenant with memory and history." Are Southern writers today further removed from those circumstances that shaped great literature?

BROOKS: Lewis Simpson worries about that more than I do. But he is a first-rate observer. So we have to take his concern seriously.

I think this: the Southern writer today is going to have to write in a different way from Faulkner and other Southern writers of the 1930s and 40s—for obvious reasons. The South can remain the South without being static. There will be shifts. Scotland, for example, has certainly retained a sense of being a separate nation from England in spite of close ties. You even have an Archbishop of Canterbury who's a good Scot and Scottish Prime Ministers running the government in London. Even so, the Scots have kept a sense of their own distinctness.

The Southern writer today who is 40 years old cannot talk to his Confederate soldier grandfather, as Faulkner could. The fact that the South must alter doesn't mean that the South will stop being a particular region.

In fact, I don't want the South to endure on a pure cornpone diet just to save ancient glory and pride. I want us to prosper. Yet prosperity brings its own dangers. New Orleans, for example, is rapidly ruining itself as a city: one great hotel after another overshadowing the French Quarter. Any city or region which goes pell-mell to attract tourists is inviting trouble.

PARTISAN: If the shaping experience of the generation of Faulkner was the War Between the States and Reconstruction, what are the shaping experiences of modern Southern writers? The 1954 Brown decision?

BROOKS: Even today, the Southern writers that seem to me ablest and best are the ones who still write with knowledge of the country people—white or black—small town, the sense of family and community. Even when they are describing the tragic experiences of families dissolving, communities going to pieces, they *see* it as something tragic. They don't take it simply as the way the world wags.

PARTISAN: That's true. And you know I have never sensed a generation gap in the South. The generation gap was bridged by the grandfather and grandchild sitting around the campfire on those hunting trips where you never hunt at all, just sit around and barbeque and swap yarns.

BROOKS: I can see that. All my family were hunters and fishermen of one sort or another. We all had this unifying tradition.

PARTISAN: Talk about hunting will be absolutely horrifying to certain literary circles in New York City. They associate the South with the brutality of "Easy Rider." You and Mr. Warren deplore what you call the "frontier unruliness and violence"[1] in the South. Part of this is associated with deer hunting, and so forth. But what would Faulkner, Lytle, Warren and the others have done without the new material that this violence permitted them to use?

BROOKS: I think all of the writers you named were brought up in that tradition, and they used it in their work. Some people have trouble accepting it. I taught a course in British and American literature at Yale. I caught the point fairly early. I would say to my class, you are going to read a great hunting story. How many of you have ever hunted at all? There might be one hand in the class. I'd tell them: you've got to get over the idea that a hunter is a sadist or a brutal man. Otherwise, you won't be able to read one of the finest stories ever written, Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses.*

PARTISAN: The stories of violence have their bad parts, but they also indicate a deeper humanity...

BROOKS: I agree. You don't want to kill the hope that we can discipline the violence. We know we will never be able to do it completely, but we certainly don't want to kill the humanity which is along side of it.

PARTISAN: Is there, in the South, a corrective to this problem? The persisting tradition of manners in the South; the taxi driver who brought our bags into the hotel instead of leaving them on the curb, as would have happened in other places; the Southerner of all economic classes who says, "Yes Sir" and "Yes Ma'am" to his parents; the courtliness of husbands toward their wives—all of those things so unfashionable today in other regions. Is this not a control over violence?

BROOKS: Yes. Allen Tate has written extensively on that subject. [Robert Penn] Warren too. If you call somebody an SOB, you'd better smile or make it perfectly plain that this is a joke and not meant. If you mean it, there will be hell to pay. So you use the lubricant of good manners, courtesy, "Thank you," "Yes Sir," "No Sir." You use the civilities because honor, even the poorest man's honor, is pretty tender. If he gets the idea that you are trying to insult him, watch out! You may have a real fight on your hands. This is where good manners are not simply a kind of elegant embroidery on the social scheme because everybody is being prissy. It's a very necessary way to help keep things under control.

PARTISAN: Do you realize what you are saying? You are *really* horrifying a lot of people with what you just said.

BROOKS: Yes, sure, I know.

PARTISAN: If I may move on to something else? Can you explain the continuing flight of Southern intellectuals from the South? You spent thirty years up north; Mr. Warren spent many years up north; Tate spent many years away from the South before returning...

BROOKS: I can answer for myself and make some guesses about a few others. It was a standard joke at Yale that Mississippi was the state lowest on the rung of educational and economic statistics. And yet it is a curious thing that Mississippi is producing more writers and fewer readers of books than any other place in the country. I used to tease my classes by pointing out that we live in this nice well-built, sanitized, high-income state of Connecticut. But name me a native son or daughter of Connecticut who is a writer. Who are they? I couldn't find any. Maybe there is a moral to this.

But, to get back to your question. Very frankly, I left LSU and the South because the *Southern Review* was

[1] *The Possibilities of Order: Cleanth Brooks and His Work*; Chapt. 1, Robert Penn Warren, "A Conversation with Cleanth Brooks."

killed. Both Warren and I left when other schools, which happened to be in the north, gave us offers. Warren went to the University of Minnesota and I went to Yale. I had a very decent friend who was the head of my department. He did all he could with the administration. They jacked-up my salary, they thought a great deal, and it was still $1500 under my other offer. At the time, due to certain family problems, I needed the money badly. And keep in mind that the spending power of money was much greater 50 years ago than it is today.

PARTISAN: But Mr. Tate spoke so bitterly, or am I misconstruing his words, when he said the South had no place for him?

BROOKS: Well, I know what he means. I would add this: LSU had no place for me. The hierarchy of the university was paying big salaries to the deans in the administration, but they would kill the *Southern Review* at a time when we were being read at Harvard and in London, and they would not raise my salary at least equal to what I could get elsewhere. So, yes, we were very bitter about it. Vanderbilt did the same thing. They refused Allen Tate a modest graduate scholarship, and they fired Warren eventually. They let [John Crowe] Ransom go at the height of his fame.

PARTISAN: Is this the prophet in his own land having no honor?

BROOKS: Yes, that's part of it. But now Warren's name is so honored, Ransom's name is so honored, Tate's name is so honored, that anywhere they go in the South, great ovations follow. I had a little part in the Fugitive's reunion of the 50th anniversary of the publication of *I'll Take My Stand*, and the place was packed. Nobody could say too much in favor of them.

PARTISAN: What about today? Who are the new voices you respect as artists, and are they able to make it here in the South?

BROOKS: Well, I think that Reynolds Price is a pretty good novelist. He has a good post at Duke. They want him there. He could go elsewhere if he chose, but he prefers to stay in North Carolina. I understand that Barry Hannan, of whose work I hear such good things, got out of teaching because like many writers, he found the university depressing. But he has chosen to remain in the South. Beth Henley, the young dramatist from Mississippi, has gone to New York, but a playwright has almost got to be on Broadway.

There are quite a number who are now staying. In fact, Allen Tate finally came back to the South at the end of his life and lived at Sewanee. He loved it and is buried there.

PARTISAN: So you feel there is no longer this drain of talent?

BROOKS: No. Some of the college administrations are pretty bad, but nearly every college and university in the South has at least one writer in residence.

There is a book that came out from a couple of people at the University of North Carolina, an anthology of recent Southern poets. There are over 70 of them in it, and the poems are very good. Most of those poets are living in the South right now. So, yes, the times have changed.

PARTISAN: Cleanth, on another subject, you have written, with hope, that education and the proper schooling will help to preserve certain values. But I always wonder whether that isn't a forlorn hope.

BROOKS: I think that it is a forlorn hope and I think it's going to continue to be unless we make what is not likely to happen: a radical change in the whole educational process. We see a few weak gestures that way in the "back to basics" program. But I think the teachers' colleges have done infinite damage to the teaching process in this country. This doesn't mean that a great democracy and a relatively wealthy democracy should not provide a good education for everybody who can take it and wants it. I think it should. The truth of the matter is that it hasn't. Granted, there are exceptions: fine teachers in public schools turn out first rate people. But on the whole, they are not doing a good job, and the fact that the literacy rate of the United States has been falling steadily for ten years tells its own story. By and large, we are not teaching people to read and write.

PARTISAN: Don't we now have the illiterate teaching the illiterate?

BROOKS: We do. We have at least two generations of poorly educated teachers. In most states, you can't teach in public schools unless you have graduated from a teachers college. Teachers colleges have historically emphasized, not content, but method, method, method. So you have people trying to teach mathematics who don't know mathematics, and you have people trying to teach English who can't speak or write English.

PARTISAN: And then there's a related question: what can formal education really accomplish? Can education teach ethics? Can love of the True, the Good, the Beautiful be taught? In a very real sense, isn't every generation condemned to start from scratch?

BROOKS: I would take a reverse step. There is a sense in which we all start from scratch. Our childhood period and our basic nature are terribly important to us, for good or ill. However, to an extent, you can train people to have an appreciation of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful. You can expose people. Good teaching can expose them to examples and indirectly may give a great deal of instruction. Not by providing formulas for the truth, definitions of the truth, and so on, but by providing models of the true and the good.

We get into a very touchy point here. Public school education in this country is dedicated, for reasons that we all know, to a pluralistic society. We are told: you can't do this, you can't do that, you are discriminating against this group or the other. The result is, the public school has been emasculated in a sense. It can no longer teach basic values.

For example, how is religion taught in most universities? It's taught historically and comparatively, which has its own merits. But if you start with an unbeliever, it's likely to end up making him more skeptical and faithless still.

The public school system and even the great private universities have to respond to a pluralistic world. What you can teach in the way of ethics is very, very little. What you can do, and this is not perfect, but hopeful: you can expose them to the great thinkers and the great artists of the world. It is

amazing how hungry college students are, the best ones, for this treatment.

Voegelin[2] made one of the most interesting comments along this line that I know. When the great revolt of students occurred in America and Europe during the 1960s, he said, the universities in part had brought it on themselves. Many students thought that they ought to get out of their university life some account of the basic values, something to believe in, something to work for. For various reasons the universities had walked around these things so warily, he said, no wonder young students, uninformed, would blow their tops in this way. They were reacting to the absence of instruction in basic values.

The whole drift of American life is toward the training school, though we like to disguise it under the name of college or university, it's a place where you go in order to learn how to make a living, learn a skill. Goodness knows, it is an important thing to know how to make a living. But what used to be and what still ought to be, the real object of humanities, is to teach not merely how to make money, but how to spend it; not merely how to acquire the means for living, but to learn the proper ends. A person who has all the means in the world and doesn't know what to live for will probably land on a psychiatrist's couch sooner or later, asking, "What's it all about? What am I building this fortune for? Why?" American education has been falling down on this business of exhibiting models of the great values of life.

PARTISAN: Plato says the object of education is to make good men. Aristotle spoke of the necessity of teaching people to use their leisure to better themselves. And we know that self-government depends on civic virtue. If civic virtue isn't taught in our public schools, then we have a situation that militates against a self-governing society...

BROOKS: I agree completely. It's quite true.

PARTISAN: Turning again to our region, will the South be able to survive the rising tide of polyesterized, three-piece suited, money-grabbing young men who are ignorant of the Southern tradition?

BROOKS: The only good signs I can see are these: I find that in the Southern schools where I have been teaching the brightest, most interested students respond right away. They are genuinely interested in Southern Literature. They are genuinely interested in the tradition dramatized and exemplified in it. They want to learn more about it; they are concerned.

PARTISAN: Now, let me get to the question of alienation applied to the Southern community. We have, all over the South, in TV stations and on radio programs, either yankees or Southerners who are ashamed of their native accent. They adopt the "mid-Atlantic" accent, whatever that is. They are doing their best to get rid of what is Southern about their speech. The common denominator of vulgarities, like a black hole in space, just sucks everything down. How do you protect against that?

BROOKS: I don't know. How does one protect civilization? How does one protect man's vision of God? How does one protect the health and vitality of a democratic society? There are no obvious, no easy solutions. It'll take eternal vigilance and a great deal of faith in the capacity of man.

I think there are some specific wrongs that we ought to try to right in education. As I've said, I have very little faith in education as it's taught. It's a shambles in many respects. I've yet to find a student who, if approached with any vigor and interest, wouldn't respond to some extent, some with limited talents and some with great talents that have never been touched.

Eric Voegelin made one of the most important, but also one of the most pessimistic, replies to this sort of question. He said, the great problem of any high civilization is to find enough good teachers, enough born teachers to instruct the new generation. He said very few high civilizations ever have enough.

PARTISAN: Then we're in a bad way. We were talking about the lowest common denominator of our students going into education.

BROOKS: That's one reason I'm in favor of the private schools. Do all you can to promote private schools. Provide a voucher system so that parents who care about the children can shop around a little. I know what the *New York Times* says when this is proposed: you will condemn public schools to the worst students; you'll snatch away the better students. I think there is some merit in that. On the other hand, I don't think that people, like the editors of the *New York Times*, see how bad the situation is already in the public schools. I think public schools need some competition. I think that parents who don't know much about education when they see how much more progress the children next door are making in private school will either try to get into that school or else raise hell with the public school. Why can't we get more people doing that?

One of the most stimulating things that I've seen was a televised account of an admirable black woman in Chicago who didn't like the way the schools were being run; so she set up her own school. It's in one of the poorer districts, and they apparently have to pay a fee. But she can't take any more students. She has a long waiting list. This is because parents, even those who are uneducated, can see the difference and say, "I want that for my child, too."

PARTISAN: Yes, parochial schools in the city are filled with non-Catholic blacks. But changing the subject, Cleanth, you say, "Indeed, I shall... argue that poetry needs religion, and that the relationship between religion and poetry is a polar relationship in something of the same sense in which we speak of the poles of an electric battery, one positive and the other negative, poles that mutually attract each other and thus generate a current of energy." Does Robert Penn Warren illustrate your point?

BROOKS: Well, it's amazing to me how many times God comes up in his poems. He is a seeker; he is a yearner. He knows how important it is and has been for a lot of people in past ages.

PARTISAN: If you don't mind, I'd like to quote some passages of yours. You say, categorically at one point, that the death of a civilization comes with the decay of religion. A little later on you say, "If one takes a somewhat

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[2]Eric Voegelin, author of *Order And History*, by many deemed the seminal philosopher-historian of this century.

longer view and believes, one can establish the community again, a truly human community, but do it without reference to transcendental faith."[3]

BROOKS: As I get older, and I'm not sure wiser, I am more appalled at the distortions of Christian theology that I find all around me. The people who honestly and so badly misunderstand it, if they could get the scales dropped from their eyes, would say, My God! I didn't realize.

I run into people all my life who think that God was wicked, not even as good as a good human being, to allow his Son to be treated so badly. I think a better knowledge of the Trinity would make them see that it is God Himself sacrificing Himself. I don't know whether the theologians of my church would accept my view, but I hope they would. Infinite harm has been done in the South by the hot gospelers. But I'll say this much for them, the South is the only region that still has some hold on the supernatural.

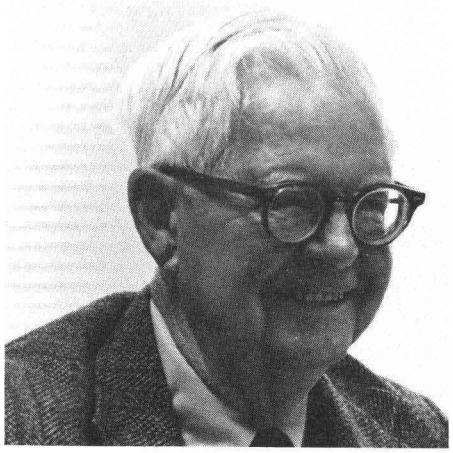
PARTISAN: You call it God-haunted. But going back to the claims of Incarnation, when a poet writes, mustn't he be aware of that claim, even if he personally rejects it?

BROOKS: I think so. I think my friend Warren has a real appreciation of Christianity, even though it's detached and not his own.

PARTISAN: Which is why he calls himself a yearner.

BROOKS: Yes. He came out of a God-fearing community, by and large. There were wicked people and good people, but I think that it was God-haunted. I know that he has a number of friends who are devout Christians, and he does not scorn them saying, "You of simple faith" or "You of blind faith." I think the claim of art as religion has been powerful in our time and I can see why, even though I don't agree with it. I can see why Joyce gave up his Church. How was he going to fulfill himself in what must have seemed to him a rather alienated meaningless universe? He made up his own universe through his work. So does Wallace Stevens, who becomes more and more of a philosophical poet. He can tell you volumes about not only himself but about our age, the artists of our age.

PARTISAN: I have one final question. The church is the custodian of the Word. Over the interpretation of very few words, the Church has suffered through the experience of terrible schisms, bloody wars, torture; the Church has become inhuman and cruel, whether in Geneva or in Toledo makes no difference. So the Church knows personally the importance of the written word. Now explain to me how the Church today can be so cavalier to what it is doing to the Word by its destruction of the euphonics of the language that we were brought up in.



BROOKS: I will simply pound one more mallet head onto the spike you have driven so well. I have spent fifty years trying to teach people the importance of words, getting the right words and putting them together; trying to show how words make drama, plays, novels and poems. The people who are supposed to be guardians of the word sometimes throw all of that away and say, "We can use any old language."

My feeling is that God will accept any earnest prayer, even if it is given in a sign language. But I'm not worried about God. I'm worried about us.

I need all the help I can get in my worship. I want the help of a great language which helps articulate what I have difficulty articulating. More than that, it's a thing that goes right back to the Jewish origins of the Church. Our sacrifice ought to be the best we can offer. To offer just cheap, shop-worn, everyday language is not good enough when we have something better.

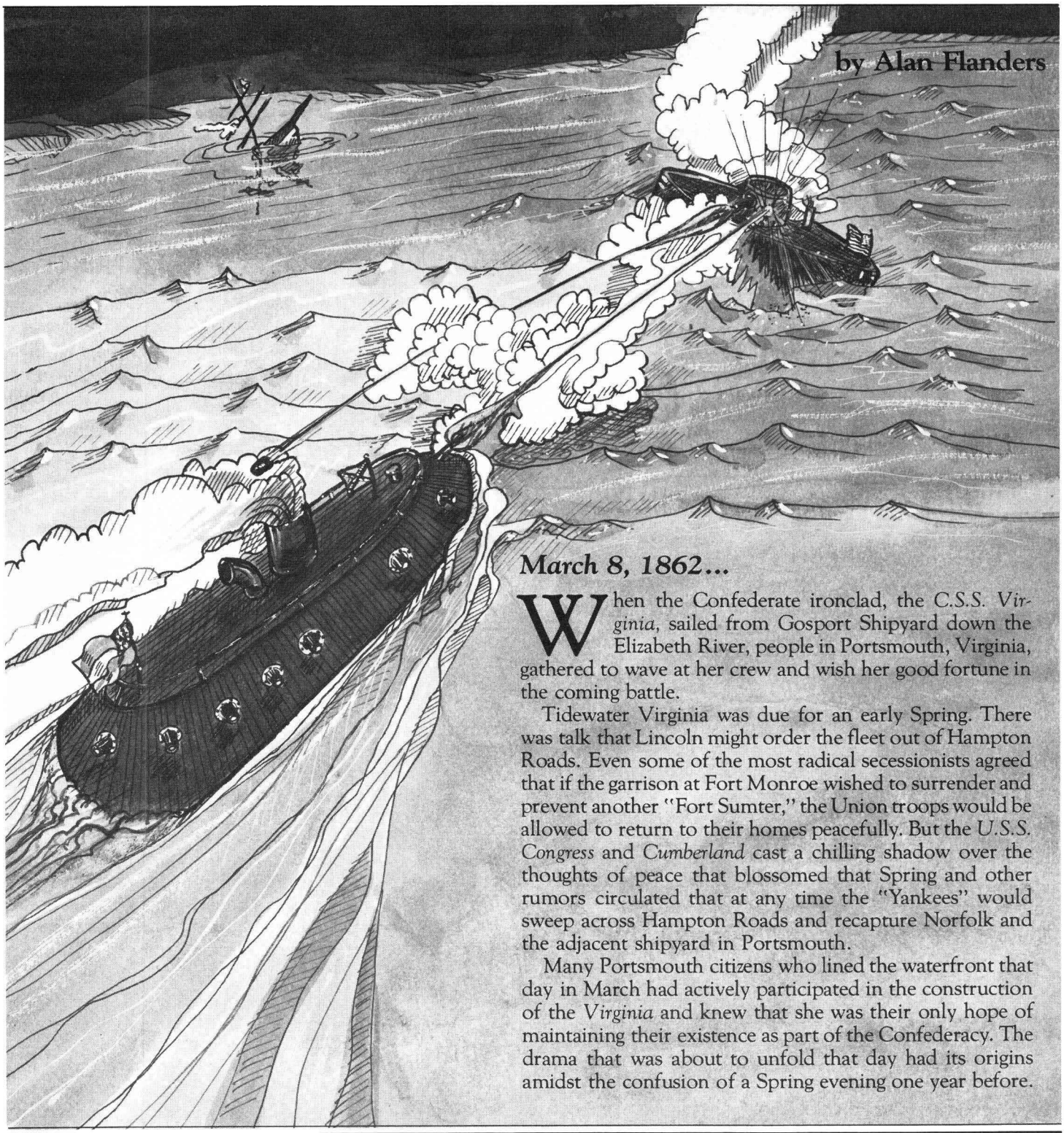
PARTISAN: We find everywhere around us this disrespect for language. In book reviews, nobody pays any attention to the language that the author may have used. They pay great attention to the utilitarian values of the book, either its message or its technical contribution to the craft. But how often have you read somebody who turns around and says, besides which this person writes damn good English. There's a general rule of indifference to the word.

BROOKS: Well, I used to tell my English students, sometimes in despair, when I thought they felt that they had no important function: "Look, take yourselves seriously. You occupy a castle at the very top of the pass. Everything has to pass your doors. Even the sociology professor is using words; so control the passes if you can; try your best to. In order words, you have got a very important function, and don't let anybody tell you that you don't." ⊠

[3] *The Possibilities of Order Cleanth Brooks and His Work.*

The C.S.S. Virginia
The Southern Invention That Changed The World

Confederate ship builders took the burnt out hull of the old U.S.S. Merrimac *and busily began constructing from the world's first ironclad warship. When word spread North, the Union began a feverish effort to build their own ironclad. The clock was ticking and naval warfare would never be the same again.*



by Alan Flanders

March 8, 1862...

When the Confederate ironclad, the *C.S.S. Virginia,* sailed from Gosport Shipyard down the Elizabeth River, people in Portsmouth, Virginia, gathered to wave at her crew and wish her good fortune in the coming battle.

Tidewater Virginia was due for an early Spring. There was talk that Lincoln might order the fleet out of Hampton Roads. Even some of the most radical secessionists agreed that if the garrison at Fort Monroe wished to surrender and prevent another "Fort Sumter," the Union troops would be allowed to return to their homes peacefully. But the *U.S.S. Congress* and *Cumberland* cast a chilling shadow over the thoughts of peace that blossomed that Spring and other rumors circulated that at any time the "Yankees" would sweep across Hampton Roads and recapture Norfolk and the adjacent shipyard in Portsmouth.

Many Portsmouth citizens who lined the waterfront that day in March had actively participated in the construction of the *Virginia* and knew that she was their only hope of maintaining their existence as part of the Confederacy. The drama that was about to unfold that day had its origins amidst the confusion of a Spring evening one year before.

A Year Earlier—April 20, 1861...

William H. Peters, Paymaster of the *Virginia* Navy (later Confederate States' Navy) and a friend, William Spooner, procured a small boat and sailed up to the shipyard on the fatal evening of April 20, 1861. As Peters and Spooner arrived alongside the wharves, the river was lighted by burning ship houses and vessels. Peters recalled that it was beyond belief why Commandant McCauley set ablaze the entire fleet including the *Germantown, Pennsylvania, Columbia, Dolphin, Raritan, Plymouth, Delaware, Columbus, New York*...and the *Merrimac.*

As they sailed further down river, they heard orders being given to ready the remaining U.S. vessels, the *U.S.S. Cumberland* and the tug *Yankee*, and prepare to cast off. Peters hailed on old family friend, Lt. Thomas O. Selfridge, already onboard the *Cumberland*. Selfridge urged Peters to join him. The entire shipyard was destroyed. Selfridge and the rest of the men were headed over to Fort Monroe. Peters answered that he wished to remain and bid his old friend who was now his new enemy good fortune.

For one day, the Commonwealth of Virginia inherited the Gosport Shipyard. Civilian employees slowly returned the next day to be greeted by Captain Robert Pegram of the Virginia Navy. Members of the local militia had assumed fortified positions in the yard already. The light of day revealed that the yard and its vast supplies and drydock had not been destroyed. Some of the shiphouses were gone, but the foundry and timber sheds were still intact. Pegram ordered those who returned on April 21, to report to Paymaster Peters and receive new instructions.

Naval Constructor John L. Porter and Naval Engineer William P. Williamson registered their names and professions along with their neighbors, but their reputation had preceded them. They were given their former positions back immediately and the Confederate Shipyard at Gosport spun into action.

Before the summer was over, the State of Virginia joined the Confederacy and the Confederate Naval Department under Stephen Mallory began to send orders for naval ordnance and supplies. Gosport almost immediately became a supply center for the entire Confederacy. And discussion naturally centered on a method to break the blockade around Hampton Roads. Mallory appointed Lieutenant John M. Brooke to direct the Ordnance Department and to co-ordinate with Porter and Williamson in Gosport to develop a Confederate Navy.

It is not known exactly which of the three, Porter, Williamson or Brooke, first suggested construction of an ironclad. Porter had submitted a plan as early as 1846 to the U.S. Naval Department. Williamson and Brooke had also studied the idea for such a weapon before the war. At any rate, all three of them were ordered to come up with a plan to free Hampton Roads for commercial traffic from Europe.

The Naval Department realized that time was of the essence and that manufacturing steam engines for ironclads was beyond the capabilities of most Southern shipyards. Williamson suggested that the *U.S.S. Merimac* be considered for salvage since she was only burned to the top section or coppers of her boilers. He and Porter were familiar with her internal arrangements.

The *Merrimac* was then towed around to drydock no. 1 and Porter began a constructor's scroll from which to plan her conversion into an ironclad. Williamson was ordered to rebuild her engines and Brooke was ordered to secure her armament of iron plates at the Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond.

After target testing off Jamestown Island in the Fall of 1862, Porter ordered 4 inch thick plates rolled for the *Merrimac* and began the construction of a casemate to cover the gun deck. He proposed that the casemate be built at an angle of 35 degrees. Only the casemate was to be covered with iron, her hull, propeller and bow would be submerged to protect them. This Porter accomplished against overwhelming mathematical obstacles by re-calculating the center of gravity, deadrise and the entire design of the vessel. Newspaper reporters were allowed into the shipyard and even onboard the *Merrimac* as work progressed.

The Confederate Naval Department had hoped the *Merrimac* would be ready by January, 1862. However bureaucratic arguments between the Navy and Army Departments over ammunition, ordnance and various other priorities caught the project in the eye of a major political storm. Porter calculated a need for at least 800 tons of iron, 10 newly rifled cannons and gun port shutters sent as soon as possible or the launch date would have to be postponed. Richmond also learned that the Union Navy would soon have its own ironclad, now that the word was out. Finally in an act of desperation, the Confederate Naval Department announced in February that the *Merrimac* was ready to be launched and that she was to be christened *C.S.S. Virginia.*

Porter grimmaced at the announcement. Her gun ports had not arrived. Only four of her cannons had any ammunition or powder and he had heard nothing from Richmond about making her bow into a ram instead of attaching a cast iron ram. But since the news of the Federal ironclad project had such impact, Porter had no choice but to rush the job and race the clock.

There was talk in Portsmouth during the first week in March, 1862, that the *Virginia* would never float. During experiments in the drydock she had settled on her blocks and had almost sunk. However, only John L. Porter realized the capabilities and weaknesses of his brain child. Finally after she left drydock and tied up along the wharves to receive supplies, he was the only worker near who was silently grave when the cheering broke across the shipyard. For he also knew that her trial run would not only be a "shakedown' cruise, but rather her capabilities would be tested under fire from an entire fleet of enemy vessels.

The *Virginia* made her first steam down river as spectators cheered along the river. Constructor Porter began to roll up his scroll and make his way home. He knew that much had been accomplished. He had succeeded in adding a new gun deck, cut down her propeller, added a fan tail and a cast iron ram. But he also knew how much was still undone. Her port shutters had not arrived. Only four of her cannons were properly supplied and when asked about the condition of her engines, Williamson could ony report that he had done all he could.

Mid-day—March 8, 1862...

The C.S.S. *Virginia* made her top speed of 7 miles per hour. She poured coal smoke out of center stack as her engine strained under the iron filled interior and exterior. She appeared to Union crew members aboard the *U.S.S. Cumberland* as not moving at all. Many sailors went about their normal duties as the day's laundry waved lazily from the rigging of the Union ship. Captain Franklin Buchannon directed the Confederate ironclad into battle that day. There was nothing like her anywhere in the world. As incomplete and unfinished as the ironclad was, the Confederate Navy had already achieved a technological miracle.

Lieutenant Selfridge, on board the *Cumberland*, observed the *Virginia* and the other small vessels that joined her as she approached Hampton Roads. A helpless feeling settled over the *Cumberland* crew just before battle stations was sounded. It was too late for many onboard the *Cumberland*. As all hands rushed to their positions, the *Virginia* prepared to broadside the delicate wooden hull of her foe.

The *Virginia* received the first direct fire from the *Cumberland*. The shots were easily repelled from her casemate. The *Virginia* then answered the fire. Her first shot passed through the starboard section of the *Cumberland*, tearing into the interior of the ship, killing and wounding nine marines in the hammock netting. The *Virginia* then assumed a raking position about 300 yards sharp of starboard. The shot and shells from the Confederate ironclad ripped and tore across the deck of the stricken Federal frigate, decapitating and tearing crew members into nightmarish pieces. The decks of the vessel became too slippery with blood to walk on. Whole gun crews were killed instantly and their twisted bodies blocked the way for fresh crewmen to man the guns. The sight became so grim that Confederate Captain Buchanan, exposed from the forward hatch of the *Virginia*, ordered a cease fire. He asked the Captain of the *Cumberland* to surrender so that the *Virginia* might aid the wounded in the water. A Yankee Marine sharpshooter on the beach and another in the rigging of the *Cumberland* answered with a volley and Buchanan fell wounded. Lt. Selfridge later stated that the will to keep fighting disappeared from his gun position after the one to their left had been hit by fire from the *Virginia*. The entire section midship was made inoperable by corpses.

The *Virginia* then pulled away and positioned herself to ram the *Cumberland*. The first blow was glanced off the starboard bow. Assistant Engineer E.A. Jack remembered that he was thrown from his position across the width of the ship. He felt a sinking feeling as the *Virginia's* ram became imbedded in the hull of the *Cumberland*. At first there was panic among the crew that the *Virginia* might be pulled down with her victim. It was at this point that the neglected engines of the old *U.S.S. Merimac* came back to haunt the *Virginia* as they failed for a moment and the Confederate ironclad seemed doomed. Finally the safety valve on the steam engine released and the *Virginia* pulled away from the sinking *Cumberland*.

With Catesby A.P. Jones at the controls, the *Virginia* turned her attention to the *U.S.S. Congress*, which had run aground trying to gain position while the *Cumberland* and *Virginia* fought. After sustaining several direct broadsides from the *Congress*, the *Virginia* opened fire and raked the *Congress* fore and aft. The *Congress* soon in a helpless position surrendered to the *Virginia*. The *U.S.S. Saint Laurence, Roanoke* and *Minnesota* did not engage the *Virginia*.

Porter's invention had been an overwhelming success and he had been right about the ram. It should have been a part of the ship, rather than an attachment. For as the *Virginia* pulled away from the *Cumberland*, the ram had ripped off and was left in the side of her victim. This was to prove a major factor in the next day's battle which also opened up another chapter in the annals of Naval History.

Saturday Evening—March 8, 1862...

The *Virginia* was tied to her berth at Gosport to be resupplied to finish the *Congress* and the rest of the blockading fleet. However, the *Ericcson Battery* or *Monitor* arrived in Hampton Roads during the night and taken her position next to the *Congress*. A new type of warfare was about to begin.

Sunday—March 9, 1862...

After the *Virginia's* crew left Trinity Episcopal Church they boarded the *Virginia* with the prayers and best wishes of their neighbors to break the blockade.

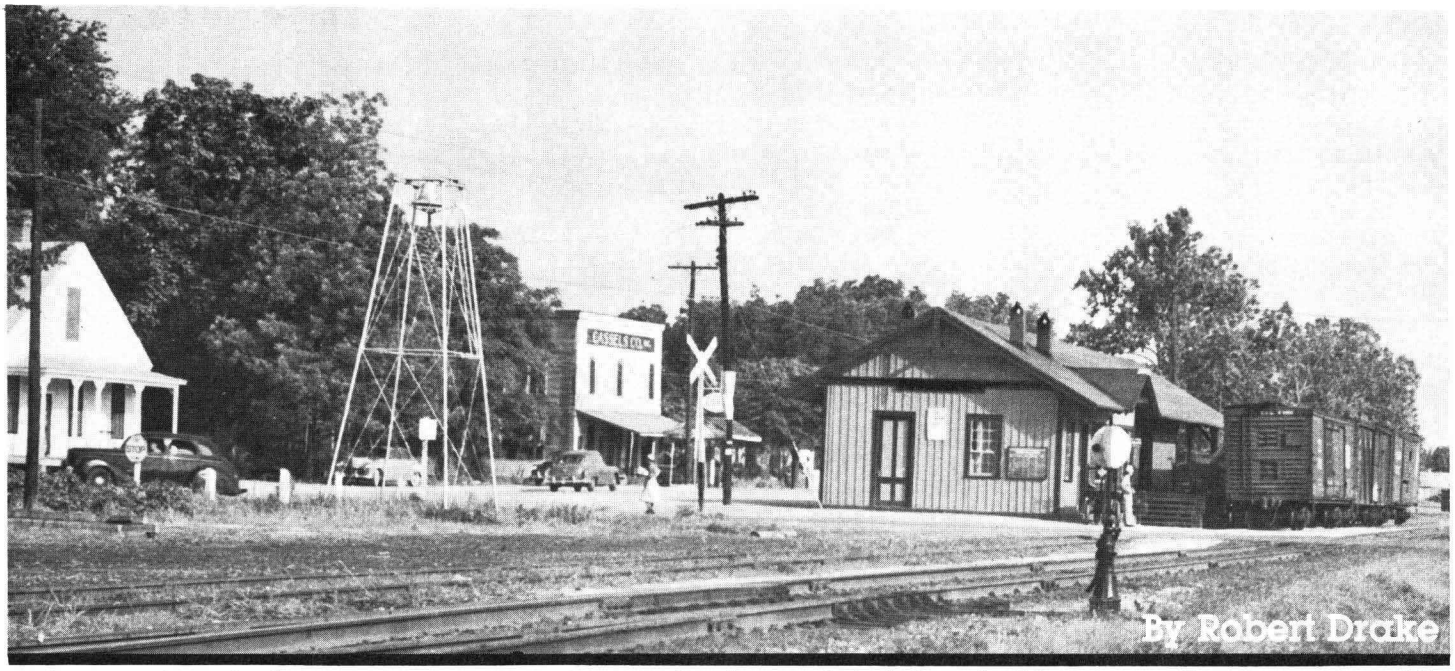
As the *Virginia* returned to the scene of its previous victories and challenged the *Congress*, the *Monitor* appeared and opened fire. Witnesses from both sides ceased their duties to witness the epic duel of ironclads. As salvo after salvo hit the shields of both ships it became impossible to discriminate who was firing last. Neither ship seemed to be able to damage the other. Had the *Virginia* not lost her ram or had she been given armor piercing shells as Porter had previously ordered, the *Monitor* may have joined the *Cumberland* on the bottom of the bay. But this was not the case as both vessels retired after doing little or no damage to the other. The battle of Hampton Roads had been won for a day by the Confederacy, but after the arrival of the *Monitor* and shortly thereafter a second *Monitor*-class vessel, the dream of keeping the sea lanes open in Hampton Roads was ended.

Late April, 1862...

Orders arrived to begin an orderly evacuation of Gosport. The *Virginia's* draft of 21 feet doomed her for destruction as well. As Paymaster William H. Peters made his final inventory of materials to be sent on to Richmond, Captain Josiah Tattnall sailed the *Virginia* to Craney Island and there she was run aground. Her magazines were exploded and the only threat to the Federal capture of Norfolk and Portsmouth was destroyed. Gosport was burned by the retreating Confederates and in the Spring of 1862, the Union Flag was once again unfurled at the shipyard. However, both sides, North and South, and naval constructors around the world agreed that the *Virginia* was an invention of singular importance. The inventiveness under pressure of those who fought the Confederate cause permanently altered the course of naval warfare. ⊠

ESSAYS

MY LITERARY EQUIPMENT:
TIME, PLACE & HOME



Robert Drake, who has given us *Amazing Grace,* is Professor of English at the University of Tennessee. Last fall, he completed a term as Visiting Murphy Professor at Hendrix College in Arkansas, where he offered a special course on modern Southern literature.

I. Going Home

Many of my friends can't understand why I still go back, from time to time, to the town where I grew up in West Tennessee. My parents are dead, and I have no brothers and sisters. But there are a couple of aunts by marriage there and many cousins and of course a considerable number of friends. The closest blood kin I have, though, are five first cousins, only three of whom still live in West Tennessee. So what is it that draws me back there; why indeed do I still call it home?

Well, it's where I was born, where I grew up, where I learned nearly everything I know about life and the world, everything, surely, about *folks.* And it's forever a part of me, wherever I go, whatever I do in the world. It conditions and defines what I hear and see today because it taught me how to look and how to listen years ago. It's where my roots are, my beginnings; and I could no more get completely outside it than I could slough off my own skin. It is finally where I'm *from*—something many people in the modern world lack: a history, a past.

I still own some property in the county; and, after all these years, I still vote there. During many moves over many years, it was the one place in my life that stayed put; and I knew who was who and what was what down there. (I still do.) And thus I didn't continually have to keep plugging into and pulling out of whatever was my temporary abode: that was just where I *worked*, not where I lived. I know now of course this wasn't fair to the communities I was temporarily placed in, and perhaps it wasn't fair to myself. But it's what I did and, in a measure, still do. For good or for ill, it's the way I conduct my life.

I think now particularly of my life as a writer. Certainly, that little West Tennessee town and county are my principal artistic capital, what I live off of; and I don't see how I could ever write about anything else, not reportorially of course but imaginatively. And it doesn't matter whether I love it or hate it; it's what I *know.* And that's where all the good writing begins—at home. That's not necessarily a matter of place on a map but place in the heart, whatever fixes and

binds our affections, whatever finally helps to define us. Certainly, geography is of tremendous importance, along with history; but neither one is a substitute for home. They're definers, conditioners, mainly. But the concept of home includes all the rest—the place, the time, the flora and fauna, and how the weather is, both outer and inner. It's ultimately our context, our clothes, and I should feel naked without it.

I think there's a great rage against context abroad in the world now. Many people can't wait to get rid of it, get it behind them like some form of imperfection which they've been cured of. "Regardless of race, creed, color, sex" and what-have-you is one of our greatest shibboleths today. And many people can't wait to move from my home town to Memphis, thence to Atlanta, and on to New York, each time putting their former abode behind them as something they're proud of having outgrown: progress. And yet where does the journey end this side of a mental institution, because that's where you'll end up, it seems to me, if you don't finally come to rest *somewhere*? Surely, this having no fixed address, as it says in English detective stories, is both one cause and one symptom of the dissociation, the alienation of the individual from society which we have come to look on as peculiarly modern. And it's not good for the individual or the arts either. And so what you get in much inferior modern fiction is, to quote Eudora Welty, not so much writing of commitment as writing of confession. Even meaningful rebellion is difficult here because of a lack of something—a place, a time, a home, what Cleanth Brooks has called a culture in being—to rebel against. The arts, one way or another, must have a home—and a particular home at that—because they thrive on the concrete and specific. Indeed, they usually begin there before going on to the abstract and universal.

So I don't really think I have to apologize for going home, either literally or in my writing. Certainly, it's sometimes sad when I return there in person to visit. There are the faces I see; there are others—an increasing number—I don't see. Time takes its inevitable toll. But I don't lose them even to death; they're all still right there in my head, to say nothing of my heart. Going home just dramatizes it all afresh for me, perhaps like a catalyst. Or, to put it another way, it's my measuring stick, my criterion of change. In one sense, I don't really *need* to go home; I know *what* I'll find there. But *who* or *who not* is the question. It's all of it my subject, my story, my world, though, no matter where else or how far I've traveled; it's all I really *know*. And for me, it's there—and only there—that good writing takes place.

But back to the literal place again. I realize it's I who am the one in the minority in the modern world, in my feeling, my commitment to one place. Much of our modern culture works against such involvement, to be sure; and even the blood tie counts for very little with many of us any more. It's as though, shaped and formed by an urban, rootless culture, we dare not let ourselves be committed to anything which might hold us down; in our world we have to be ready to pull up stakes and leave, almost like outlaws, day or night, at a moment's notice—for where? The destination, of course, is immaterial because we can't afford to become attached to it either. It's all of it a series—an infinite series—of way-stations en route to—who knows? That's it: in our world, which is increasingly deprived of any meaningful cohesiveness, nobody seems to know or care. And it's all of it awfully hard on the gizzard, on the affections, to say nothing of anything else. And it's awfully hard on the arts in consequence: people have to feel very strongly about *something* in order to create, I believe. And by *something* I don't mean *ideas*.

I gather that few people today are accustomed to asking new acquaintances "Where are you from?" Indeed, it's been suggested to me that my own concern with such matters implies snobbishness, exclusiveness, and other things which also aren't to my credit. That all seems absurd to me: where one is *from* is part of his self—or ought to be. The fact that so few people today feel this way (Flannery O'Connor said of the majority "They ain't *frum* anywhere") suggests to my mind a defect in them, not in me. Again, it's part of the rage against context, the great lust to strip off all the "irrelevancies" until one gets down to—what? Some sort of residuum which is the real me, the real you, "regardless of race, creed, color, sex," and so on? Don't be ridiculous!

Where one is from (geography) is something like where one has been (history): they are both considerations which ought to suggest to the individual that the world did not—and does not—begin and end with him. They both, in a sense, rebuke the individual when he aspires too high. Even more, they tie him in with something larger than himself, both here and heretofore—maybe even something like the Communion of Saints. And in the arts they thus give him something to create from larger than himself. And the gigantic artistic ego is then always at work in relation to *something else* and is thus held in check.

Perhaps I hold up a mirror (my mirror, of course) to them from time to time and let them see themselves, but that's all. If I quarrel with anybody here, it's with myself as seen in relation to my home town: it's much too big for me to take on.

William Butler Yeats made a crucial distinction between the quarrel with *others*, out of which he said we make rhetoric, and the quarrel with the *self*, out of which he said we make poetry. Well, I don't think I've ever quarreled with my home town. Sure, there are things about it and its citizens I may not like; but, unlike Gulliver, I don't see myself as writing for either their amendment or their approbation. Perhaps I hold up a mirror (*my* mirror, of course) to them from time to time and let them see themselves, but that's all. If I quarrel with anybody here, it's with myself as seen in relation to my home town: *it's* much too big for me to take on. But what has it done, what has it not done to *me*, who have been inevitably shaped and formed by it for all time? That's the real question. Faulkner never engages Yoknapatawpha County in debate, remember rather it's the human heart in conflict with itself, as he noted in his Nobel Prize speech, that is his real subject. Working out inside himself what Yoknapatawpha and its life have all meant to him:

that's where he begins. Certainly, what Faulkner or any other writer creates may have social and political implications. But that's not his first object—either to report the news or teach a lesson, much less conduct a debate. And for my money, the biggest heresies in the writing—I had almost said perpetration—of fiction today are the itches to turn it into either *news* or *argument*. Honest writers—and readers—will be glad to settle merely for the truth. Conrad suggests as much in that wonderful preface to *The Nigger of the Narcissus*.

It's where my roots are, my beginnings; and I could no more get completely outside it than I could slough off my own skin. It is finally where I'm from—something many people in the modern world lack: a history, a past.

Again, I love my home town; I don't always like it perhaps. But there it is, and there's nothing in the world I can do about it! To ignore it, to repudiate it would be tantamount to abjuring my own flesh. (And perhaps a theology of Incarnation lies behind much that I've said here. To understand, to possess one time and one place makes us, in some ways, at home in them all.) And it doesn't matter, finally, how often I go—or don't go—back. It's *there*—on the map and in my heart and soul forever, perhaps my greatest resource both as a writer and as a man.

Several times in the last few years I have received telephone solicitation calls of even more sinister presumption than usual: they have wanted to sell me a cemetery lot in the community where I now live! But I have dealt with them quite summarily. I told the solicitors that if there was anything in that part of the world I didn't need, it was a cemetery lot because there were at least two spaces waiting on me right that minute in West Tennessee! I don't know how the respective salesmen received my reply; but I felt suddenly that I had gotten something off my chest that had been weighing on me without my really knowing it. And I knew right then that I had just articulated something which I had been sure of for some time but hadn't so far put into words: my old home and my long home would ultimately be the same and of a piece with all in between. How many of us in the world today can be sure of as much? And I knew that I was fortunate and blessed and, furthermore, that I would not—indeed, could not—have it any other way.

II. Is There Any Market for Good Women?

I have a cousin whose husband walked out on her several years ago; and when he left, he said to her, "You're a good woman, but there's just no market for good women." It's an amusing enough anecdote, and nobody has laughed at it more than my cousin herself. But I've had occasion more and more to reflect on its pertinence for a good deal besides the marital scene. And I speak here as an English professor, who was educated to be a scholar and critic, then, almost as much to his surprise as anybody else's, found himself writing fiction.

And what I think I'm doing is writing short stories, not a novel, about the only part of the world I seem to know anything about—the rural and small-town West Tennessee of my childhood some forty years ago and perhaps its extension on into the present. And I don't write about sex and I don't write about minorities and I'm not long on violence either. In short, I don't write news. In my work nobody gets raped, nobody gets lynched, and nobody gets exterminated. While I'm at it, I should add also that I don't write about hapless individuals lost in the anonymity of the urban present or any others who may be having mid-life or other crises about who they are and what they're doing here. Nobody in any of my stories has ever been in the slightest doubt about who he is or where he's going. (Speaking personally, I haven't either.)

So you may well ask where all that leaves me and what do I have left to write about anyway. Well, perhaps very little as the modern world goes and yet perhaps, looked at another way, the whole wide world itself. (I'm quick to add here that fantasy literature bores me stiff; so have no fears on that score either. This world right here, with all its limitations, is fantastic enough for me.) But there are always enough people around to write what Sir Walter Scott called the big bow-wow stuff; there are always enough people on hand to report the news; in fact, there's always lots of competition to git thar fustest with the mostest in that heat. On the other hand, I don't think there's ever a great deal of competition to tell the truth in fiction—or for that matter, anywhere else. Conrad, we might remember, said that was the fiction writer's prime responsibility; but then he also added that truth was the very thing most people forgot to ask of the fiction writer—in their demand to be enlightened or consoled or edified or whatever. My own dear mother, God rest her, may have been one such—late Victorian as she must have been (though by no means a prude either). Her habitual criterion for evaluating fiction was always whether or not it was "uplifting," which now suggests to me some sort of artistic brassiere.

But perhaps that was no worse than some of our modern critical heresies either: it was just more blatant. Because by and large today, most people want fiction to be topical or timely or relevant or something of the sort, and they want to be gripped and wrung out and made to "stop and think" by harrowing tales from whatever are the front lines of the moment. They want news. And this leads me to think always of Thoreau, who, I keep saying, was something of a literary critic (and a good one too) though always of course unbeknownst to himself. Remember how he inveighs against the ordinary citizen who can't take a half-hour's nap after dinner without then sitting up and demanding to be told what news has transpired meanwhile? And his observation was right on target too: he said that all those news-hungry folks, for all their inquiries after the light, little knew that they themselves dwelled in the dark unfathomed Mammoth Cave of this world and indeed were really blind all along. And anyway, he said, all so-called news was just gossip and they who wrote it and they who read it were all old women over their tea. Travel, which Emerson had already warned might be a fool's paradise, Thoreau dismisses as of no value, where getting the news is

Kirk Still Leading The Charge

by Boyd Cathey

***A review of: The Portable Conservative Reader**, edited by Russell Kirk, New York: Penguin Books, The Viking Press, 1982. 723 pp., xl, Introduction, notes, index.*

Thirty years ago Russell Kirk wrote *The Conservative Mind*, and the American body politic has not been the same since. An entire generation was enabled to rediscover the perennial vitality of a Burke, a Randolph and a More. The influence Kirk has had on young minds, in particular, cannot be over-estimated. I think of my own case, born in rural North Carolina, I first became aware of Russell Kirk through a book of essays entitled, *What Is Conservatism?* My 1965 Christmas gifts included *Beyond the Dreams of Avarice, Old House of Fear, A Program for Conservatives*, and, of course, *The Conservative Mind*. I remember the relish I experienced when I literally devoured the contents of those tomes; the relish has never left me. When later I started corresponding with Dr. Kirk, and finally, after beginning my graduate education, went to be his assistant, I considered myself—as I still do—one of the most fortunate young men in America. From Mecosta, to Spain and Switzerland, and back to North Carolina, I have carried that experience, with its rich educational and humane benefits, with me. Much may have happened since then, but nothing so determining.

This most recent volume, *The Portable Conservative Reader*, is a carefully selected and edited collection of essays which, to my mind, serves ideally as a companion to *The Conservative Mind*. As the earlier Kirk volume traces the train and development of the somewhat amorphous body of Anglo-American conservative thought during the last two hundred years, so *The Portable Conservative Reader* includes generous excerpts from the writings of many of the lead characters who make their appearances in *The Conservative Mind*. A finely-chiseled introduction sets the tone and describes the limits and goals Kirk intends for the volume.

As in *The Conservative Mind*, Kirk restricts himself largely to English and American conservatism. I admit that in most studies of conservatism, in the anthologies, and so on, this has always been one thing that has bothered me. Conservatism, as that adherence to the natural and moral law and to the teachings of the Church, the defense of tradition, and the love of place, is something quite universal. Indeed, Kirk says as much himself: "something that we may call the conservative impulse or the conservative yearning does exist among all peoples. Without this instinct, any society would fall to pieces.... In that sense, a kind of universal conservatism may be glimpsed." (p. xxxv, Introduction). But it is clear that if we consider the American experience as our measure, it is the Anglo-American variety that affects us most.

For much of the last two hundred years an identifiable English conservative tradition, incarnated in the Conservative Party, has enjoyed a dominant position in English society. Its leaders have included Canning, Wellington, Disraeli, and Churchhill. Its antecedents reach back to Magna Carta, to the medieval Schoolmen, and, in a later period, to a Richard Hooker and a Sir Thomas Browne. The American conservative tradition is much more illusive. Some writers have gone so far as to deny that an American conservatism has ever really existed at all. Louis Harty and others have maintained that the American nation was founded on the Rationalist principles of the Enlightenment. For them, any kind of conservatism on this side of the Atlantic tended to conserve basic principles which were "liberal" to begin with. Beginning with the Declaration of Independence, America was shaped in a liberal mold which successive generations have only continued.

Undeniably there is some truth in this. Yet the strands of continuity between the American experience and the Old world are stronger than the dissimilarities. Conservatism is not dependent on the alliance of throne and altar—one does not have to be a monarchist to be a conservative. Kirk's oft-repeated "six canons" of conservatism are present in any number of diverse climes and historical situations. In the United States such a discernible conservatism has manifested itself throughout our history. So Kirk points out, John Adams, Gouverneur Morris and John Dickinson were men of conservative temperament and The Federalist Papers and The Constitution, itself, reflect this same temperament. In his basic lineaments the American conservative "is a person who believes strongly that the old pattern of American society ought not to be much altered. Typically, such a person holds by the Constitution, maintaining that it should be strictly interpreted; he endeavors to oppose the drift toward political centralization; he dislikes organizations on the grand scale, in government, in business and industry, in organized labor; he is a defender of private property; he resents the heavy increase of taxation and many of the transfer payments of the welfare state; he is unalterably opposed to the Communist ideology and the aspirations of the Soviet Union; he sighs, or perhaps shouts, O *Tempora! O Mores!* at the decay of private and public morality." (p. xxviii).

It is perhaps in the Old South that American conservatism finds its most

notable exemplars: men like Calhoun, Randolph (both represented by ample selections in the *Reader*), Nathaniel Macon and George Fitzhugh, plus an intense attachment to the land and to custom, and a belief in a transcendant God, helped make the South the most conservative of America's regions. It is true, as Kirk says, that the "catastrophe of the Civil War dealt a grim blow" to conservatism. But the sense of tragedy and defeat, together with a profound understanding of human nature, have, if anything, reinforced the Southerner's conservatism. Only the South could produce a Harry Byrd or a Richard Weaver.

The conservatives Kirk features in this *Reader* are refreshingly free of cant so often associated with an economically-centered conservatism. Through its adherence to transcendant moral norms and its rejection of utilitarianism and unrestrained individualism, their high-minded conservatism refuses to make economics the measure of man. It is uncomfortable with those who think the dollar or the "American way" synonomous with civilized society. While defending the right to property, conservatism asserts that property should be used as a means in life and not as the end. A conservatism of mere possession, Fafnir-like, is at the mercy of destructive ideologies. Robert Lewis Dabney, unreconstructed Confederate that he was, saw this clearly one hundred years ago when he scathingly denounced the hierarchs of the "New South" who wished to turn the South country into a little Pittsburgh.

In some of his other works, Kirk talks of the moral imagination, one of the distinctive characteristics of a truly reflective conservatism. It suffuses the selections in this volume. Whereas conservatism has suffered some serious defeats, politically, since the days of Burke, it surfaced victoriously in the world of letters. Many of the great writers and poets of our age illustrate this. What a curious commentary on the course of events since Burke's time that it is the vision of the poets which must remind us of what we have lost and what needs be conserved and passed on to posterity.

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Is it any wonder that men of imagination reject out of hand the vacant drabness of Marxism and the moral bankruptcy of liberalism? English poet Laureate Sir John Betjeman recoils in poetic horror from "The Planster's Vision" (p. 545):

I have a vision,
of the Future, chum,
The worker's flats in fields
of soya beans
Tower up like silver pencils,
score on score;
And Surging Millions hear
the challenge come
From microphones in
communal canteens
"No Right! No Wrong!
All's perfect, evermore."

The conservative experience is a *lived* experience, grounded in the rich soil of time-tested norms. I recall a good friend of mine in northern Spain, not a wealthy man materially, but certainly one of the most complete persons I've ever met. A Carlist volunteer against Spain's Socialist republic at the age of fourteen, he works now in a potash mine where Communist influence is predominant. But he refuses to flinch in his defense of Spanish tradition. He once single-handedly ejected five Communist agitators who were illegally attempting to organize the miners. He assists Mass daily, he studies his catechism assiduously, and he greatly enjoys that finest of Spanish products, tinto wine. Since his creed is orthodoxy, he doesn't spend half his waking hours trying to "find himself." His feet are firmly planted in normative canons of life as old as Spain itself.

The Portable Conservative Reader includes several pieces from contemporary conservatives, among them Irving Kristol, Robert Nisbet and Malcolm Muggeridge. Nisbet published his epochal *The Quest for Community* in 1953, continuing the great tradition of social philosophy begun by Frederic Le Play one hundred years ago. The selection included is from *Twilight of Authority*, a defense of the variety of subsidiary organs in society. From Irving Kristol we have a critique of modern economics and a spirited case made for an enlightened, socially-responsible capitalism. Malcolm Muggeridge speculates in a scintillating essay on what he sees as the death-wish of liberalism.

It is perhaps in the Old South that American conservatism finds its most notable exemplars: men like Calhoun, Randolph... Nathaniel Macon and George Fitzhugh, plus an intense attachment to the land and to custom, and a belief in a transcendant God, helped make the South the most conservative of America's regions.

Three representative women writers, Freya Stark, Phyllis McGinley, and Jacquetta Hawkes, find niches among their masculine counterparts. It would have been nice to see something from Flannery O'Connor, but then, if Kirk had included much more in his *Portable Reader*, it would have soon ceased to be "portable."

Our age has been called "Post-Modern" by Romano Guardini and John Lukacs. The ideologies of the last two hundred years seem bankrupt and in headlong retreat. In such a case there is a grand opportunity for a renewed conservatism to capture the imagination of men. And it will be reflective conservatives like Russell Kirk who lead the charge.

Boyd Cathey worked in Mecosta as an assistant to Russell Kirk. He earned his Ph.D. in Spain and now works as an Archivist with the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources.

The American South: Towns & Cities

by Rod Gragg

The American South: Towns and Cities. With photographs by William A. Bake and text by James J. Kilpatrick, 2234 pp. Oxmoor House. $29.95.

What is the South? If you have to ask the question, Southerners will tell you, you wouldn't understand. William A. Bake and James J. Kilpatrick don't have to ask. They know. This new joint work by photographer Bake and reporter Kilpatrick is ample evidence that they know the South.

This is a coffeetable book—handsome, heavy and appealing—but it's not a typical big book of beautiful pictures. This book is different. It's not even a typical photo essay about the South. For one thing, this work portrays Southern towns and cities, unlike most Southern photography, which usually concentrates on the enduring Southern countryside. Maybe the difference lies in the subject—the urban South instead of the rural South. Maybe that's the key to the unusual appeal of this work: somehow, in the midst of recording the South of cities, photographer Bake and reporter Kilpatrick have still portrayed the rural South, the Old South, the *real* South.

The American South: Towns and Cities contains 260 full-color photographs by Bake, a Boone, N.C. photographer whose work has appeared in several books and numerous magazines. Bake has that rare photographer's gift: the ability to transform the mundane into eye-catching art. He demonstrates his gift in a variety of images—a stone lion on a St. Augustine bridge, a government building in New Orleans and a wide porch in Shreveport.

Through his camera, the book captures the South from Baltimore to Miami, from Tampa to Amarillo. His images, like the South, are alternately graceful and rugged, gentle and powerful, nostalgic and progressive, modern and traditional. Row houses in Baltimore, geraniums in Richmond, a shady street in Jackson, a bandstand in Dallas—all express the South of today while evoking the South of back then. It's true that many city scenes could be shots from another American region and it's true that even Bake's photography cannot make Florida's strip beaches attractive or Southernesque. That phenomenon is disturbing, yet the essence of the South penetrates even the bland repetition of hamburger chains and discount stores. James Kilpatrick notes that distinction in his accompanying text. Kilpatrick, the former editor of the *Richmond News Leader* and the most widely syndicated political columnist in America, offers some thoughtful observations about the Old South and the New South.

"Throughout the length and breadth of the Republic," he writes, "when you've seen one supermarket or shopping mall, you've seen 'em all. Our traffic lights flash red, green and amber, just like everyone else's; our skyscrapers are just as glassy, just as boxy, as the skyscrapers of Seattle and Detroit. Same hotels and motels. Same french-fries. Yet a traveler who meanders from Baltimore to El Paso —especially a traveler with Bill Bake's camera eye—finds the experience richly rewarding. And if we travel back in time, as Southerners are wont to do, past and present commingle as gently as this year's annuals in the past century's gardens."

Kilpatrick's text is not a superfluous requirement to Bake's photography. The words of this book are as important as the images. In fact, it's Kilpatrick's observations about the Southernness of these cities which make the reader appreciate the extra dimension of Bake's photography.

"We are Southerners," Kilpatrick summarizes. "Within our own region, we have changed considerably since the Agrarians were writing in 1931. We are more citified, more hispanic, proportionally less black. Our schools have changed; our politics have changed; our adherence to certain customs and traditions has changed. In some ways, we have hardly changed at all. Our women still marry younger, have more children, and hold fewer jobs in private employment than the women of other regions. We are still poor in material wealth, although gaps are closing. We still have more illiteracy than other regions have. We still are gunslingers and gospelsingers, and we still evince an intensity of regional pride that is unmatched anywhere else. This is our South, and we love it." –RG

The New Nationalism

by John Bliese

A Review of: Joel Garreau, *The Nine Nations of North America.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1981.

Where are the fault lines in the psychological geology of North America? Southerners dwell on the basic regional division between North and South. Those of us from the west, however, think we must be a separate region as well, for the phrase "obnoxious Easterner" has a very clear meaning to us. Now comes Joel Garreau, an editor of the *Washington Post*, to inform us that our continent is much more complex. A recent *Southern Partisan* cover asks, "Is the South a Nation?" Garreau would answer, "Yes, and there are eight other North American nations as well."

We may have thought, he says, that mobility, television, and plastic fast food restaurants are making North America uniform. Not so. In fact, as our continent matures, our regions are becoming more distinct, not less. "The various portions of the continent are, right now, bringing a new sense of sovereignty to the way they view the world."

The regions Garreau identifies are not political units, so they do not appear on our maps. Political boundaries are merely accidental. If we are to understand how North America "really works" we must look rather at the way we have divided it into nine separate nations, each with its own natural capital. He names these nations: New England, The Foundry, Dixie, The Islands, Mexamerica, Ecotopia, The Empty Quarter, The Breadbasket, and Quebec. Each nation has its peculiar history and economy. Each has emotional allegiances. Each has its own list of desires and plans, and a distinct prism through which it views the world. A few nations are allies, but many are adversaries. A brief summary cannot do justice to the color and flavor of each region which Garreau portrays through a marvelous mixture of anecdotes, conversations, examples, even statistics. The descriptions are lively, often funny, always believable.

New England, with Boston as its capital, contains those northeastern states we would expect, plus the maritime provinces in Canada. It is the poorest of the nations, in terms of resources, but it makes an *a priori* assumption that it is the only civilized one. New England is becoming the first 21st century post-industrial society, with its future in high tech. Having suffered decline some time ago, it is now stable, and has some economic advantages because its infrastructure is fully depreciated.

The Foundry's border starts just above New York City. It extends south to Indianapolis, swings east taking in the Ohio River valley, and ends just south of Washington. Its capital is Detroit. The Foundry is tough, the land of heavy industry, hard work, and hard times. People's values focus on work—identity and self-perception are based on jobs. Archie Bunker is the perfect Foundry stereotype. It is the American Melting Pot—even the metaphor is from a foundry.

Garreau describes Dixie as "a quilt," with great local differences. Atlanta is the capital. It is defined more by emotion than any other nation. And it is the only nation contained entirely within the United States.

Garreau's characterization of Dixie is, even to this non-Southerner, the least satisfactory of the lot. I seriously doubt that any Southerner will believe he has captured the essence of Dixie.

Garreau's characterization of Dixie is, even to this non-Southerner, the least satisfactory of the lot. I seriously doubt that any Southerner will believe he has captured the essence of Dixie. He appears least sympathetic to this nation, and his description seems superficial, in comparison with the others. For example, he dwells on Southern poverty, while never mentioning the slums of the great cities of The Foundry or Mexamerica. Perhaps this is simply because Dixie's rural poverty is more visible from the highways—but it makes one suspicious, nevertheless.

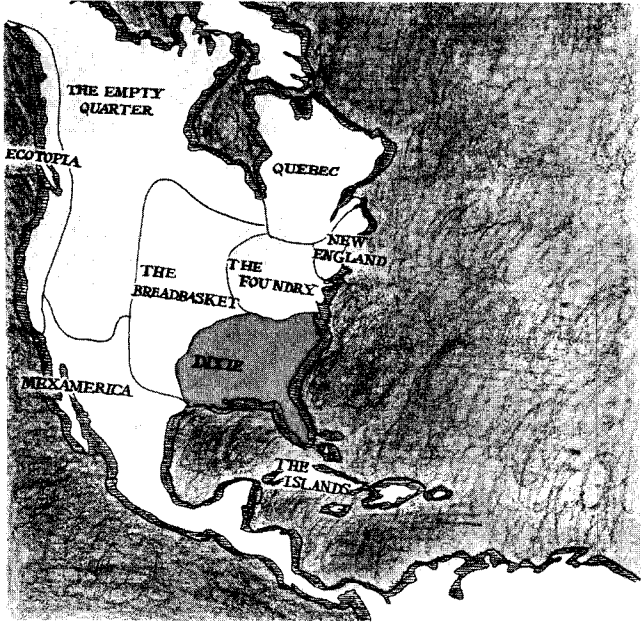
The most important characteristic of Dixie, he says, is change, epitomized by the changes in attitudes about race. The threat of Future Shock now ties Dixie together.

Dixie's development is more evenly distributed than in many parts of North America. Yet the growth is still catch-up growth. Not one state equals the national average per capita income.

One thing that impressed Garreau about Dixie was that few have any idea where the region should be heading. He refers to John Egerton's belief that "in return for the mess of pottage represented by the proliferation of modern McDonald's stands, the South is trading its birthright." Yet that would indicate that Dixie is going against the trend of history, which is for the regions to become more individualized, a conclusion Garreau refuses to accept.

The description of The Islands is easily the funniest—and the most pathetic. With its capital in Miami, The Islands' number one industry is drug smuggling—at an estimated rate of some $52 billion per year. Trade with the Western Hemisphere is number two, and tourism, largely from Latin America, is now down to number three. Miami has absorbed an enormous number of refugees, many of whom think of themselves as temporary exiles and therefore have not even attempted to integrate into American society.

Mexamerica is treated as a land where two cultures are coming together: Los Angeles, the capital, is the number two city in the U.S., and also the number two Mexican city. Anglos see this region as the promised land, as do huge numbers of illegal aliens, and it has experienced tremendous growth that shows no sign of letting up. It is a dynamic nation that could not exist without automobiles, air conditioning and aqueducts. Its two dominant problems that determine everything else are water and energy.



The nation with the marvelous name of Ecotopia is a narrow strip of coastal land from Santa Barbara north along the Cascades all the way into Alaska. This is the land of the alternative life style, where income is willingly sacrificed for quality of life. Its capital is San Francisco.

The largest nation is The Empty Quarter, containing one-fourth of the continent but only 4% of its population. This is the inter-mountain West, from its capital, Denver, to the Sierras and from the Grand Canyon to Alaska. It contains some of the most spectacular scenery in the world, and most of the Quality 1 air left to us. The land, immensely rich in energy resources, is mostly owned by the Federal Government. It is the land of the boom town, with all that implies: conflict of old timers vs. new comers; rapidly increasing crime; strain on social services. The Empty Quarter is afraid that it is to be the National Sacrifice Area for the rest of the continent—that its fragile, dry land will be chewed up to light Los Angeles and Boston. As the last colony of North America, it is fiercely anti-Eastern.

The Breadbasket extends from central Texas to Manitoba and from eastern Colorado and Wyoming to Wisconsin and Illinois. The capital is Kansas City. The Breadbasket is based on the most successful agriculture the world has ever known. This is the nation most at peace with itself, the nation that works best. Social calm is its most important characteristic. It is the ratifier of social customs: when some new trend is finally accepted in The Breadbasket, it has definitely become mainstream.

The most distinctive nation is Quebec. It is the most homogeneous, and most of its inhabitants speak no English. For long it was oppressed by Anglophones who treated it with paternalistic contempt. It was a backward, ingrown region, and developed its own independence movement. The ensuing terrorism and martial law scared both sides into being reasonable. Quebec has now become transformed into an urban, industrialized nation.

Finally, there are four "aberrations," Garreau calls them, areas that don't fit into any of the nine nations. The first is Manhattan, whose inhabitants divide the world into "New York" and "not-New York," and think civilization ends at the Hudson. They received a terrific psychic jolt at having to beg from "not-New York."

Washington, D.C., is an "imperial capital," nerve center of a welfare state that does not have much faith in democracy. Its aberration is in its refusal to recognize itself as an aberration.

Alaska thinks it is a separate nation. The final frontier, it is an area over which other nations are at war.

Hawaii is distinct because Europeans are a minority. It has Ecotopian possibilities, Mexamerican growth values and limits, and is run by Asians.

Are Garreau's descriptions accurate? In the final analysis each one will have to judge for himself on the basis of his own experiences of the various nations, and possibly one can only really judge his characterization of one's own nation. For myself, I find his treatment of my nation quite accurate, even if I might draw a border differently here and there. But, however one may quibble with the details, it is quite clear that he is onto something important.

Garreau's analysis would seem to have many implications, but, surprisingly, he draws very few. One would expect a conclusionary chapter at the end, but there is none. So one must turn to the brief introductory chapter for his few suggestions.

Garreau would have us understand "how North America really works."

If he is right—and I think he is—we may take hope that we are not being transformed into universal plastic copies of Anywhere USA. The trend of our history is quite the opposite—the nations that compose our continent are becoming ever more distinct; the *pluribus* is coming back into the *unum*.

These divergencies help explain some of the major storms of public affairs. The most pressing continental concerns—for example, energy—result in the greatest regional complications. Right now, North America has nine often contradictory energy programs, each tailored to the demands of a particular nation.

Moreover, our economic policy seems to be imposing on the whole country policies based largely on problems peculiar to The Foundry, and the rest of us just have to live with the results.

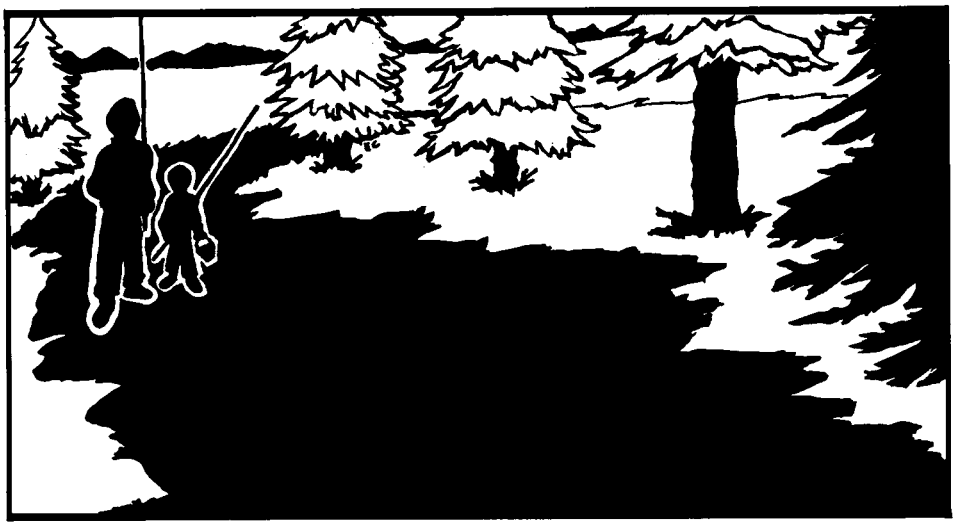
It also seems that the way is now opened to more conscious coalition or balance-of-power politics among the various nations. For example, I think a Southerner who reads the chapter on The Empty Quarter will see vast opportunities for an alliance on a good many issues.

But perhaps in the end, the most important point of this book is a personal one. We are all shaped by our origins. "Thus, to come away with a new understanding of regionalism is to come away with a better understanding of yourself." For "every North American knows...a place where, on your way back from your wandering, surroundings stop feeling threatening, confusing, or strange. Ultimately, that's the reason we are Nine Nations. When you're from one, and you're in it, you know you're home."

John Bliese is an unabashed Western regionalist who hails from Nebraska. He is assistant professor of speech and director of forensics at Iowa State University.

The After Prime-Time Life of Andy & Barney

by Harry Hope



Richard Kelly, *The Andy Griffith Show*. Winston-Salem, N.C.: John F. Blair, Publisher, 1981.

Most television comes from that most provincial of towns, New York. It's an easy matter for Southerners to haul up the Silvermans and Tartikoffs before some imagined magistrate of good taste and make an excellent case against television networks' excesses. Yet conglomerate, corporate TV could offer one excellent example in rebuttal, *The Andy Griffith Show*.

During the 249 episodes of its eight years in prime time, the program offered no sex, no violence, no global intrigue, no spies, no preaching, no leaping Dodge Chargers, no sweaty blacks fighting racial in-*jus*-tice and no swearing. Sure, you say, you couldn't have gotten away with any of that in the early '60s. It had to be squeaky clean, or it wouldn't have aired. True, but why is the *Andy Griffith Show* still enjoying a raging popularity in syndication? Why, tucked somewhere in local TV schedules between the evening news and *Family Feud*, or just before the *Tonight Show* or the late movie, do people still want to watch some 20-year-old program improbably focused on a small-town sheriff who doesn't even carry a gun and looks nothing like Rod Steiger, for cryin' out loud? The producers have even committed the grievous sins of an all-white cast who —gasp!—worship in a—horrors!—whitewashed Baptist church, where they sing the old hymns and the preacher talks about—yecch!—sin.

Once in a blue moon, excellence creeps in, craft is raised to art, yocks and boffos subordinated to character development, pathos replaced by empathy, and when all this happens week in and week out for eight years, we have something, and in the case of the Griffith show, it is a time for glad bells in Dixie.

Richard Kelly, a professor of English at the University of Tennessee, has put together what the book cover notes describe as an "unmistakably thorough examination" of the *Andy Griffith Show* and it is hard to quarrel with that wording. Kelly's examination reveals no less than a genuine gem of a series produced with love and dignity, with attitudes and characters worth caring about, and with a classic sense of drama and place.

Unlike so many current shows, the Griffith show actually improved over the years, and as it improved, the true main character of the program slowly grew into focus—the town of Mayberry, North Carolina, itself, suspended somewhere between fiction and fact, a thinly disguised Mount Airy, located somewhere around Pilot Mountain (Mount Pilot) and Siler City, with that grand metropolis, Raleigh, away in the distance. In one episode, for instance, a stranger comes to Mayberry who knows everyone on sight, their comings and goings and quirks and whereabouts, and it begins to excite the typical xenophobia of a small town until the stranger reveals that he had served in the army with a Mayberry boy who used to tell stories about the town. After the stranger left the army, he continued to subscribe to the *Mayberry Gazette* and eventually decided to claim Mayberry as his hometown. (Who, after all, dwells in smog and crime and under the continued assault of full-throttle radios *all* tuned to the same station playing the same Swahiliesque chants, does not dream of a town such as Mayberry?)

In a sense, that stranger lately come to town represents us, the viewers, who perceive life in Mayberry as one long, easy Sunday afternoon between dinner and the evening's peach ice cream. Not so much as a lawnmower down the street disturbs our serenity, because who in Mayberry would even think of cutting the grass on Sunday?

The Andy Griffith Show gave us something to hold on to, and Kelly's book tells why and, just as importantly, how. It is worth pointing out that since the show was axed in 1971, none of the actors, except Ron Howard, has had a truly successful television series. Let us also recall the ax wielder, Fred Silverman, who declared in 1971 that programs with rural themes were unacceptable in the scheme of sophistication that CBS was trying to offer.

Well, somewhere in a rented office with potted palms, Freddie Silverman is on the horn making futile deals, exiled from the corporate board rooms, while all over the nation, Andy and Opie saunter down the road to Myer's Lake once again. Sometimes, there is justice in the world. Kelly's book helps us appreciate that. ⊠

Author Note:
Harry Hope, former editor of *Sandlapper* magazine, is busily planning to get married and move permanently to a South Carolina country home.

Tom Wolfe: All The Right Stuff

by
Lake High, Jr.

Several men have recently made good their threat to declare as candidates for President of The United States. So far we have been spared most of the pronouncements of these aggressive people who are making the quest for the presidency a three year ordeal. But soon their PR staff will be churning out tons of copy destined to clutter the front page of our daily newspaper. We will all be up to our ears in the platitudes of candidates who have really very little to offer other than a heart-felt desire for their own advancement.

It just so happens, however, that four years ago Tom Wolfe wrote a grand book appropriately entitled *The Right Stuff*. A book worth dusting off now because it gives us a close look at one of the current Democratic candidates for President, former astronaut John Glenn. Wolfe's description is not the sort of thing that the press will be carrying between now and convention time in 1984, but this four-year-old book is destined to play a part in the upcoming run for the Presidential nomination.

Tom Wolfe is an essayist in an era when almost no one reads essays. So we have to label him a journalist. Just try to find one of his books in a used book store and see what I mean. His work isn't fiction, therefore it must be nonfiction (the bookseller reasons). But where to put him? Not in the history section, not in the biography section. Since there is no section marked "essays," Wolfe poses a categorical dilemma to the store owner. One perplexed store manager tried to solve the problem (and was more right than wrong) by putting Wolfe's books in the section marked "Classics."

It's true that some academic types sniff at Tom Wolfe and call him a "mere journalist" (as distinguished from a *true* writer as they view themselves), but they usually sniff softly since his PhD from Yale intimidates most academic types. Plus they cannot deny the fact that his style of writing has caused a revolution in modern journalism. All around, hundreds of budding writers are trying to imitate his style and flow.

The thing that makes Wolfe's "stuff" so very right is that he sees things correctly and draws the correct conclusions. It is fun and refreshing to read the truth, especially in a time when the Mailers and movie-makers of the world see humanity in pathological punks like Gary Gilmore who don't even have the self-control not to commit murder while the reviews are still favorable; or the Kate Milletts and the Susan Sontags who specialize in getting it wrong every time on every subject. In a crazy world, it is a delight to read an observer who stylishly and consistently draws the right conclusions.

Take *Radical Chic*. When Wolfe published that article (later published in book form along with another essay called *Mau Mauing the Flac Catchers*), it was the "in" thing to do in New York to boycott grapes and have a few Black Panthers over to add a little color to one's Fifth Avenue party. Within one week of its publication every limousine liberal in the nation was running for cover. We can give Wolfe single-handed credit for stopping the "inness" of swank fund-raising parties for terrorist groups.

Then there was *The Painted Word*, his sixth book published in 1975. After its publication hundreds of unfortunate victims (mostly New Yorkers and Bostonians) who had pretended to like and understand modern art were happily saying they never did really like it anyway and to prove it they were not going to buy any more of it. Another hoax bites the dust.

So now we have *All The Right Stuff*, which gets its title from old astronaut jargon. A test pilot could do many things right. He could fly well, face death with a cool head, be a comrade to his fellows, and still not quite have the right stuff. Whatever the right stuff was, it had to be there all of the time. It had to be there under all conditions, and it had to be recognized by one's fellow pilots.

Wolfe, who couldn't have known in 1978 that John Glenn was going to run for president, has, unwittingly, given us a great character insight into a man who wants to be our highest leader. In two paragraphs, about a third of the way through the book, Wolfe sums Glenn up:

> *Every move Glenn had made undoubtedly worked against him.... He was the Eddie Attaboy who had gotten up every morning at dawn and done all the ostentatious running and tried to make the rest of them look bad. He was the Harry Hairshirt who lived like an Early Christian martyr in the BOQ. He was the Willie Workadaddy who drove around in a broken-down Peugeot, like a lonely beacon of restraint and self sacrifice in a sequel of car crazies.*
>
> *And so now Glenn was driving back home, through the stunted Virginia countryside and the raggedy snowflakes, to tell Annie the secret bad news. And the new President was screaming over the car radio: "Together let us explore the stars..." Sheppard would be first! He would be famous throughout eternity! And there was something even more unbelievable; he, John Glenn, for the first time in his career, would be one of those who was* ***left behind.***

Well, as it turned out, being the third American into space worked out to be the best spot, because the first two only went into shallow space and returned, whereas the third shot was actually the first *orbital* flight and the one that got for Glenn all of the hoopla and the ticker tape parades that he longed for. It was that lucky spot from which he went on to an undistinguished career in the U.S. Senate, launching his political orbit in left-looping liberal circles.

The point to be remembered in all this is that Glenn's comrades were correct in their judgment that he lacked "the right stuff." And it's my guess that the American people will endorse that assessment. If they do, the cocky little Virginian in the white suit who writes only "the right stuff" will have helped expose yet another hoax.

Meanwhile, if you do not yet have *The Right Stuff* get thee to a book store and have a wonderful time.

Author Note: Lake High is a native of Columbia, South Carolina, a businessman and a free-lance writer.

BOOKNOTES

Crisis: The Last Year Of The Carter Presidency

By Hamilton Jordan. G.P. Putnam's Sons. 431 pp. $16.95. 1983.

On November 4, 1979, Hamilton Jordan, President Jimmy Carter's Chief of Staff, was asleep in a friend's home on Maryland's eastern shore. At 4:30 a.m., he was awakened by a telephone call from the White House. "Mr. Jordan, this is the duty officer in the situation room," the caller announced. "We wanted to advise you that the American Embassy in Tehran has been overrun by demonstrators and the American personnel are believed to be held in captivity."

For Hamilton Jordan and the Carter Administration, that occasion began a year of crisis which ended in frustration and political defeat. Jordan recounts the inside story of Jimmy Carter's last year in the White House in *Crisis*, an informal, free-spirited account in which Jordan presents the Carter perspective on his final, troubled year in office.

Above all, as Jordan illustrates, the Carter Administration was hampered by the seizure of the American Embassy in Iran and by Carter's inability to find an effective and honorable solution to the crisis. Repeated attempts to free the hostages by conventional and bizarre negotiations ended in failure; the last-ditch attempt to end the crisis with a rescue mission ended in death and disaster in an Iranian desert. In the end, Jordan believes, it was voter frustration with the dragged-out hostage situation which caused Carter to be repudiated with a landslide electoral victory for Reagan.

Certainly without intending to do so, Jordan's book reveals a Presidential administration in disarray—with no one seemingly able to act decisively. At one point, because Jordan had arranged the details of the Shah's exile in Panama, Carter put "Ham" in charge of the negotiations to free the hostages. From the book's account, Jordan worked hard at his assignment, but the reader cannot help but wonder why Jimmy would have put such a delicate, important job in the hands of an inexperienced 30 year-old political operative. A simple reading of the Carter attempt to free the hostages leaves the impression that the negotiations with Iran were doomed to failure from the beginning by reason of general incompetence. Mr. Jordan's book confirms our worst suspicions.

James Henry Hammond And The Old South

By Drew Gilpin Faust. 407 pp. Louisiana State University Press. $27.50. 1982.

South Carolinian James Henry Hammond was the epitome of the Old South—a plantation owner, a politician, a man of influence and wealth, a defender of slavery and a witness to the destruction of the fabled plantation lifestyle.

Hammond's life and the lifestyle of the antebellum Piedmont planter is captured in minute detail in this new work by historian Drew Gilpin Faust. Chairman of the Department of American Civilization at the University of Pennsylvania, she is well-equipped to produce such a study and she could not have picked a more appropriate subject.

James Henry Hammond, born in 1807, the son of a New England educator, rose to prominence in antebellum South Carolina. He became Governor of South Carolina and served as a U.S. Senator from the Palmetto State on the eve of the War. His plantation, Redcliffe, located on the Savannah River, was a rambling fiefdom of cotton, corn, orchards, vineyards and gardens—tended by more than 300 slaves.

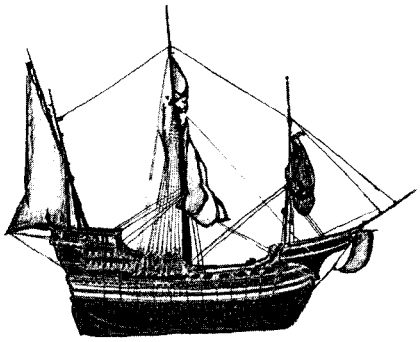
Hammond, "an almost obsessive record keeper," maintained a lifelong trail of documents, which make this book an incredibly definitive study. "Hammond's life was the pursuit of a design outlined for him by the Old South itself," Faust writes. "His existence in many ways embodied the rules for succeeding in this society: his failures marked the penalty the South exacted of him in those areas where he fell short, for Hammond found he was ultimately unable, as his design required, 'to control myself in every particular.' His human tragedy is particularly one of the Old South, of the demands made upon its native sons, of the rewards granted the deserving, of the texture and meaning of both success and defeat within that unique society that existed below the Mason-Dixon Line between the Revolution and the Civil War."

When slavery and the plantation society on which it depended crumbled at the end of the American Civil War, Hammond wrote that it was "time for me to die....All the efforts of my life...will be upset and reversed."

He *did* die before it ended—laid beneath the earth at Redcliffe as Union General W.T. Sherman burned a swath across Hammond's beloved South Carolina, ending the life of the planter aristocracy forever.

Martin's Hundred

By Ivor Noel Hume. 343 pp. Alfred A. Knopf. $17.95. 1982.



In 1619, a group of English colonists established a settlement on the James River in Virginia near what would one day be the city of Williamsburg. Three years later, after struggling with the land and the weather, the settlement, Martin's Hundred, was virtually wiped out when over 300 settlers were killed in a bloody Indian uprising.

For 350 years, Martin's Hundred and its massacred residents were almost forgotten. Then, in the 1970's, an archaeological team from nearby Colonial Williamsburg accidentally uncovered evidence of the lost settlement, and suddenly the story of Martin's Hundred came to light again.

Now the story of Martin's Hundred and its amazing resurrection is told in this engaging new book by the director of the archaeological project, Ivor Noel Hume. Hume has directed the archaeological program at Colonial Williamsburg since 1957, and has written a variety of books on history and archaeology.

His new book, recording the discovery and excavation of Martin's Hundred, carries the suspense of a mystery and the drama of a treasure hunt.

Step by step, layer by layer, Hume reconstructs the past. This is no stuffy study, but a highly readable work combining history and detective work to recreate living people who left a historic legacy.

The book is richly illustrated with 147 photographs and pictures, providing a close examination of the unearthed artifacts, including a visored soldier's headgear—the only close helmets ever found in North America. Hume's painstaking approach even provides possible identities to some of the skeletal remains found at the site.

Thanks to Hume and his team of archaeologists, the mysterious residents of Martin's Hundred will live on in the textbooks of the future.

The Winter People

By John Ehle, 272 pp. Harper & Row. $13.95.

With the possible exception of the American West, no other geographical area of North America has fascinated writers like the American South. It has been chronicled in histories, saluted in poetry, mythologized in fiction. Today the South and things that are Southern continue to be probed and poked by a new generation of writers.

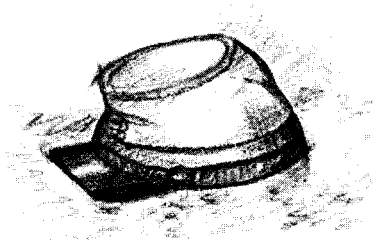
John Ehle, a native of Asheville, N.C., knows the culture of Southern Appalachia. His skill at capturing the atmosphere of the Blue Ridge Mountains is obvious from his new book, *The Winter People*, released by Harper and Row. In a series of books, Ehle traces the lives of several generations of mountain families. This one, his latest, is set in the North Carolina mountains during the Great Depression and details the romance and intrigue between a wandering Pennsylvania clockmaker and a mountain woman who is claimed by a mean-tempered hillbilly.

Ehle has produced a superb recreation of the customs and flavor of Western North Carolina, but his story is needlessly crude in places. Sensitive readers, especially Southerners, may be repelled by the crass dialogue Ehle places in the mouths of some of his male characters. Ehle, who should know better, also stumbles into the common flaw of depicting mountain people in literary cliches. The men of his book are too often mean and emotional, given to bouts of drunkeness and senseless violence. The women are too often clever, pious and ignorant. Mountain feuds and independent women were not uncommon in Southern Appalachia, but neither were the honest, level-headed mountain men and women who treated each other with dignity and respect. A city slicker like James Dickey may be excused for stereotyping mountaineers, but a North Carolinian like Ehle should know better.

The Union Cavalry In The Civil War

By Stephen Z. Starr. 512 pp. LSU Press. $30.

Historian Stephen Z. Starr makes a valuable contribution to "The War," which is forever a part of the South. In volume two of *The Union Cavalry in the Civil War*, Starr thoroughly documents the history of the blue-clad horsemen who eventually played a major role in the defeat of the Southern Confederacy. As in his earlier first volume, Starr here concentrates on the war's eastern theater, following the development and action of the Union cavalry from Gettysburg to the war's end. Starr's work is not as lively as a Bruce Catton narrative but it is scholarly, readable and definitive.



Early in the war the Southern cavalry proved itself clearly superior to its Yankee counterpart, but as the conflict wore on, the attrition of men and mounts sapped the Confederate cavalry. Meanwhile, the Union horse soldiers steadily improved. By Appomattox, the Union horsemen held a decisive edge which damaged the Southern cause. With Starr's book, LSU Press has wisely picked a solid piece of work which should be marketable for years to come.

DEVOUTLY SPEAKING

Rod Gragg

A Tithe For Marx

Officials of the National Council of Churches are now trying to deflect recent criticism that the Council uses church tithes to support Marxist causes. Composed of liberal Protestant denominations and headed by Bishop James Armstrong of the United Methodist Church, the NCC is publicly denouncing recent stories about the Council produced by *Reader's Digest* and CBS-TV's *60 Minutes*.

The stories traced American church contributions through the NCC to organizations like the Soviet-backed Christian Peace Conference of Czechoslavakia (which endorsed the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan); the Marxist-oriented North American Congress on Latin America; the leftist Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador and even the current communist government of Viet Nam. NCC officials admit the reports about the funding were true, but nonetheless claim the stories were somehow biased and inaccurate.

Baby-Makers For Hire?

Surrogate motherhood is being promoted in legislation now proposed in at least four states. If passed, the bills would allow women to be artificially inseminated, conceive and bear children for childless couples—all for a significant fee. Surrogate-mothering-for-pay could then become a major revenue-producing industry like the abortion industry has become. Opponents argue that surrogate mothering puts children on the auction block, encourages financial exploitation of women's bodies, has a negative psychological impact on the other children of surrogate mothers and further cheapens human life. But if doctors can terminate the life of an unborn child, then some legislators apparently believe they ought to be able to put a price tag on human beings.

The Odd Bishop

United Methodist Bishop Melvin E. Wheatley, Jr. of Colorado continues to defend his decision to ordain homosexuals to the ministry, despite repeated calls for his resignation. The latest call comes from the First United Methodist Church of Colorado Springs, one of the largest United Methodist churches in the nation. Although the United Methodist Church has supported the Gay Rights Movement with time and money, many Methodists—especially in the South—resent their denomination's support of homosexuality, which they note is clearly condemned in the Old and the New Testament.

The controversy in Colorado began last year, when Wheatley appointed a homosexual minister to the pastorate of a Denver church. Wheatley continues to defend his action, arguing that homosexuality is *not* sinful nor reason to deny someone a pastorate in the United Methodist Church.

Back To Basics

At a time when most colleges and universities are struggling to maintain current enrollment levels, King College in Bristol, Tennessee is recording steady, significant enrollment *increases*. King, a Christian college, did not achieve its success without a battle, however. Over the years, like many church-related schools, King College had gradually drifted away from its original mission of teaching the liberal arts with a Christian perspective. The college encountered drastically reduced enrollment and financial hardship so severe that the school's parent denomination, the Southern Presbyterian Church, tried to give the school to the state of Tennessee, which refused the offer.

Then a few years ago, a group of conservatives gained control of the college through a remarkable legal battle and set about to return the school to its original mission—teaching the liberal arts with a Biblical perspective. Today, blessed by a new-found reputation for strong academics with a distinctive Christian perspective and buoyed by financial support from conservative churches, King College is in the midst of a major building program, and college officials have the rare, wonderful worry of trying to figure out what to do with all the new students.

Christian Book Is No Secret

For the first time in years, a Christian book is topping secular best-seller lists. *The Secret Kingdom* by Pat Robertson, president of the Christian Broadcasting Network, has reached the top ten on bestseller lists compiled by *Time* magazine and Ingrams, the country's major book wholesaler. Released last fall, *The Secret Kingdom* promotes discipleship by encouraging readers to embrace eight Biblical principles for dealing with contemporary problems in an increasingly secular society. Already in its eighth printing, Robertson's book has sold almost 300,000 copies and is still in strong demand.

The Partisan Dictionary

Gentility — Outside the South, tact is stranger than friction.

Agnostic — One who is unsure about God (and, presumably, vice-versa).

Irish Republic — A nation with solid, commendable values, except for an unaccountable desire to reunite with its North.

Honor — To define honor in words is like defining "blue" in braile.*

Brotherhood — An attitude preached as Biblical, and usually practiced according to precedent of Cain and Abel.

Retirement — When one reaches the age he can tell the world he isn't working.

**With this difference: the blind do not fault the sighted for their eyes to guide them.* —Robert W. Whitaker

ON THE RIGHT TRACK

W. D. Workman, Jr.

The New Federalism

Government in the United States, and in each state of the Union, continues to proliferate as a "growth industry." It has reached such proportions that the citizenry remains understandably skeptical, both of men and of measures which promise to curtail its size (and expense).

This is not to suggest that a major revision of the U.S. Constitution is needed at this juncture. Let it be noted in passing, however, that President Reagan might better serve our nation if he would devote less emphasis to his "New Federalism" and emphasize more what might appropriately be termed "The Old Federalism." Indeed, the development of Federalism as embodied in the original Constitution of the United States merits the accolade of being America's unique contribution to political science.

Unique though it may be, however, the American form of government does lend itself to undeserved cost and complexity as it is practiced at state and national levels. True, President Reagan seems well motivated and moderately successful in his avowed determination to keep governmental costs and activities within reasonable bounds. Even so, much more could and should be done to give Americans less government, rather than more, whether from Washington or from elsewhere.

One device which shows some promise toward that goal is the "sunset" approach to new legislation and its accompanying administrative trappings. Unfortunately, the "sunset" approach—which incorporates provision for automatic self-destruction upon the accomplishment of a specified legal mission—has come to be honored more in the breach than in the observance. It generally goes against the grain of politics (and politicians) to incorporate terminal provisions within a given legislative package.

The concept of "sunset" legislation, by the way, involves an intriguing bit of early American history. Let us turn back to the year 1669, when the Carolina colony was being conceived in the minds of King Charles II of England and the eight Lords Proprietors to whom he had granted that huge tract of the New World. At that time, one of the Lords Proprietors, Lord Anthony Ashley-Cooper (the first Earl of Shaftesbury), and his friend and physician, John Locke, set to work to devise a constitutional form of government for the new province.

In their "Fundamental Constitutions," these two men embedded what might well have been the very first expression of a "sunset" law:

> *To avoid multiplicity of laws, which by degrees always change the right foundations of the original government, all acts of [the colonial] Parliament whatsoever, in what form soever passed or enacted, shall, at the end of sixty years after their enacting, respectively cease and determine of themselves, and without any repeal become null and void as if no such acts or laws had ever been made.*

Other innovations in the pattern of government were embodied in the Fundamental Constitutions, but came to naught when the Carolina province proved unsuited for the type of landed aristocracy contemplated by the Lords Proprietors. Early in the 18th century, Carolina assumed the status of a Crown Colony, and the Fundamental Constitutions—like the Proprietors themselves—became of historical rather than governmental interest.

Still later, when the new nation was taking shape, Carolinians played major roles, not only in the military attainment of freedom from Britain, but also in drafting both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. But in more recent years, as the number of states proliferated from 13 to 50, South Carolinians and other Americans have witnessed the growth of government to a degree never contemplated by their forebears.

One facet of this growth has been the enactment of laws in astronomical numbers—so much so that public reaction seeks to diminish the flood of legislation. The incorporation of the "sunset" feature cited above has reflected one approach to the problem, but with limited results.

What is now needed is a device to curb the flow of bills and resolutions at the point of origin. Therein lies a challenge to create an official agent on the legislative scene who would function, no matter by what title known, as a "devil's advocate."

What is now needed is a device to curb the flow of bills and resolutions *at the point of origin*. Therein lies a challenge to create an official agent on the legislative scene who would function, no matter by what title known, as a "devil's advocate." Such an individual or office would be charged with the continuing responsibility of *opposing* each piece of suggested legislation, whether sponsored by individual legislators, committees, or otherwise.

True to the religious role whence comes the name and the nature of such an official, the "devil's advocate" would research both past and present legislation so as to raise every conceivable objection to the enactment of laws not already on the statute books. Indeed, his responsibility could do much toward cleansing the books of existing laws which have served and outlived their purposes.

Chances are that such an individual would be regarded as a *bona fide* "devil." But anything approaching a meaningful function of obstruction could serve the multiple purposes of clearing statute books of obsolete and unnecessary laws, as well as thwarting attempts to enact new laws of dubious necessity.

Initially, the "devil's advocate"—whether at the hub of national or state legislation—would likely be despised and denounced by self-serving politicians. But a conscientious dedication to the purging of unnecessary legislation should give him both public approbation and a personal sense of governmental achievement, through the sensible curtailment of needless legislative growth. ⊠

NOTES FROM CONFEDERATE MEMORIAL HALL

Song of the South

John Edward Hurley

Ironically, many of the most endearing songs of the South were composed by Northerners. But they had visited the South or had roots in the South and were enamored of her guileless ambience and the open hospitality that sprang from her Christian ethos.

Stephen Foster was one of these composers. He was born near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and spent most of his life as a resident of that city. He had many Southern friends, however, and visited the South often. It was during these visits that he was inspired to write such Southern classics as *Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground; Old Folks at Home; O Susanna; Old Black Joe; Away Down South; Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair;* and many others.

When Foster wrote *My Old Kentucky Home* he was referring to the Rowan home in Bardstown, Kentucky, where he was a frequent house guest. The Rowans were fond of both Foster and his music, and insisted that he stay as their guest for long periods and compose his music, which he did.

When the War broke out, Foster's Northern friends gave him the benefit of their marketing advice. They reasoned that, if he wanted to make money, he should give up writing Southern songs. It had now become too controversial and, besides, all of the big publishing houses were in the North, mostly in New York.

Foster was persuaded by these pecuniary arguments. He moved to New York and began writing songs about the imagined qualities of Abraham Lincoln, parroting the canards about saving the Union, and wrote numerous pieces on the Grand Army of the Republic, which was neither grand nor republican, since centrist theories and enforced values are incompatible with the term.

What Foster's marketing mentors didn't know was that Southerners weren't the only ones who had caught on to Lincoln's unconstitutional plans to arrogate power to himself and his cabal of usurpers. On March 3, 1863, Lincoln signed the Draft Bill. This measure made it possible for well-to-do Northern men to evade the draft by paying $300 to provide a substitute. Since most of the poor and immigrant populations of the North were indebted to these men for passage money or were working under indentured contracts, they were forcibly enlisted and sent to their probable death on Southern battlefields, while their rich and effete fellow citizens relaxed safely at home and waxed eloquent on their egalitarian theories.

Lincoln himself, in a grand public relations gesture to demonstrate his support of the new law, paid the $300 for a substitute. The prospective draftees were not impressed and, although not schooled on the finer points of the Constitution, they knew that the inequity was the result of rank despotism.

Riots broke out in New York City. The Eleventh New York Volunteers and three regiments were called in to quell the disturbance but they were inadequate to the task, so widespread was the hostility. The Seventh Regiment was called to the City then the One Hundred and Fifty-second and, finally, the Sixty-fifth New York Regiment had to come from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

The troops unlimbered their howitzers, loaded with grape and cannister, and fired point-blank into the crowds of men, women and children. This procedure was repeated again and again, with the approval of the Lincoln administration. The police commissioners reported 1,200 slain in their body count, but there were many more since corpses in the waters all around Manhatten Island were carried out to sea.

The riots spread from New York City proper to other places: Brooklyn, Jamaica, Staten Island, Jersey City, and Newark; then to Troy, Boston, and Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

This was the market that Foster hoped to capture with his Yankee songs promoting Lincoln's march to immortality. Needless to say, the survivors of this wanton carnage were in no mood to buy such music, though it was widely published and available. Only the Union bands, who were forced to play it, provided Foster with a market, and this was scant indeed.

Foster died penniless in the charity ward of New York's Bellevue Hospital, another of history's many victims of expediency.

Dixie's Land

No discussion of Southern music is complete without reference to *Dixie*, or *Dixie's Land* as it was originally known. This premier song of the South was also composed by a Northerner, Daniel Decatur Emmett, who was born in Mt. Vernon, Ohio, in 1815. But Emmett's roots ran deep into Southern soil: his father was from Staunton, Virginia, and his mother from Frederick, Maryland.

He joined the Army in 1832 as a fifer and drummer, and dedicated himself to music. He wrote *Emmett's Standard Drummer, Emmett's Fife Instructor* and *Old Dan Emmett's Original Banjo Melodies.*

Success really came, however, when he originated the first minstrel troupe, the "Virginia Minstrels," in 1843. After its success in America, he took the group to England, where it was equally well received.

When he returned in 1857, he joined "Bryant's Minstrels" in New York as a composer, singer and comedian. He wrote dozens of minstrel songs including *Old Dan Tucker* (Dan, for himself; Tucker, for his dog), *The Blue Tail Fly, Old Zip Coon,* and *Turkey in de Straw.* He wrote *Dixie* in 1859, and when it was presented on April 4th of that year it was an instant hit.

In 1895, late in his life, Emmett made a farewell tour. It became a triumphant procession through the South. Audiences stood and cheered as the 80-year-old Emmett sang *Dixie.*

Back home in Ohio, where *Dixie* was darkly looked upon, he was considered an eccentric. His great-grandson, addressing this point, wrote many years later: "If it is eccentric to have created the first American words and music for which half the Nation rises to its feet, to recognize simple values and to live by them, to know sincere religious faith, then Dan Emmett moved in a radius outside the scope of most men."

Sounds of the Past

Most of the Southern songs we hear today are not performed the way they were originally written. Not only have the scores been changed to accommodate modern instruments, but the sounds have been altered because of the modern instruments themselves. During the War Between the States, backfiring instruments were used; that is, the instruments were engineered to project the sounds over the shoulders of the band members to the rear. The idea was to envelop the Confederate soldiers in music as they marched behind the band.

Now, for the first time, a project has been undertaken to replicate these Southern sounds. George Carroll, former music master of Williamsburg (Va.) and musical consultant to the Smithsonian Institution, has assembled the original period instruments and scores and will conduct his group, "Musick Virginia," as they recreate the authentic sounds of the past. His renditions are not just for the musical archivist; they are exhilarating and will stir Southern blood as it has not been stirred in a century. *Dixie*, the old standards, and some little-known works that were popular during the period are included in his repertoire.

This program is the idea of Mrs. Stuart M. Charlesworth, president of the District of Columbia Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Under Division sponsorship and with the cooperation of the Confederate Memorial Association, Mrs. Charlesworth has graciously suggested that fifty percent of the net proceeds from the venture be donated for the restoration and preservation of Confederate Memorial Hall, the only shrine to the Confederacy in the nation's capital.

A 45-minute cassette tape of this truly unique music may be obtained by sending a $10 tax-deductible contribution to:

Southern Music
Box 31
Upperville, VA 22176

Checks should be made payable to Treasurer, D.C.U.D.C.

Dixie's Land.
1859
"Walk 'Round." Composed by Daniel D. Emmett.
for Bryants Minstrels.
Allegro
Song
I wish I was in de land ob cot-ton, Sim-mon sud an
Chorus
san-dy bot-tom, Look a-way- look way, a- way Dix-ie Land. In
Dix-ie land whar I was born in, Early on one fros-ty mor-nin, Look a-way- look
way, a- way Dixie Land, Den I wish I was in Dix-ie, Hoo- ray, Hoo -
ray, In Dix-ies Land, we'll took our stand, To liv an die in Dix-ie, a -
way, a- way, a-way down south in Dix-ie, a-way, a-way, away down south in Dix-ie.
Daniel

"DIXIE" as composed on Emmett's original manuscript.

THE LAST WORD

Reid Buckley

Whazzit Gonna Be for an Encore?

At their synod this May, the Roman Catholic Bishops of the United States promise to turn their attention to the "morality" of capitalism.

Well, why not? After their proposed pastoral letter on the morality of nuclear arms, it is problematic whether the free society that is essential for the proper functioning of capitalism will survive. Having despatched the goose, why not the gander?

Can the Church applaud a system whose premise is selfish? George Gilder has impishly tried to make a case for the altruism that (he says) is at the heart of capitalism. This reader was amused, but not convinced. (The *effects* of capitalism are demonstrably beneficial, but that's another argument.) More recently, Michael Novak (*The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*) strives to pin on our economics a bouquet of social and civic virtues. Capitalism, he notes, is the one economic system that is congenial to democracy, because "modern democracy and modern capitalism proceed from identical historical impulses." Quoth he, "No society...owes more than our own to the inspiration of Jewish, Christian, and humanistic traditions."

The Church cannot bless the political construct that places at its center of values an "I don't know" (which it then seeks to impose on the social tissue).

Nice, but wherein a stumbling block for all who denominate themselves Christians. Christianity and humanism mix like Baptists and bourbon. It is at this putative reconciliation that the Catholic Bishops may be expected to balk.

In the best humanistic tradition is the pluralism of our democratic society, and this is the matter. In his Harvard University philippic, Alexandr Solzhenitsyn damned the "moral poverty" of our culture. Novak quotes a stinging passage: "Two hundred or even fifty years ago, it would have seemed quite impossible, in America, that an individual could be granted freedom with no purpose...a total emancipation occurred from the moral heritage of Christian centuries..." This because at the heart of the pluralistic proposition, as Novak confesses, is an "emptiness." He puts it, "In a genuinely pluralistic society, there is no one sacred canopy. *By intention* there is not. At its spiritual core, there is an empty shrine. That shrine is left empty in the knowledge that no one word, image, or symbol is worthy of what all seek there. Its emptiness, therefore, represents the transcendence which is approached by free consciences from a virtually infinite number of directions." That emptiness is, for Novak, the price of political liberty.

Notwithstanding, how can we expect Catholic Bishops genuinely to embrace the pluralistic proposition, which is embedded in the capitalist dynamic? In his brilliant *No Offense: Civil Religion and Protestant Taste*, John Murray Cuddihy sums up John Courtney Murray's 1960 apologetic, wherein the great Jesuit and Thomist tried to reconcile the liberal society with Catholic beliefs:

The central thrust of Murray's *We Hold These Truths* is to eliminate a personal *and* theoretical "embarrassment" for Catholics. "It is customary," he began, "to put to Catholics...an embarrassing question: Do you really *believe in* the first two provisions ["no establishment" and "free exercise"] of the First Amendment?" Murray's retort was: these articles are not articles of faith, but articles of peace enabling a people of plural beliefs to live together...They are legal not credal; pragmatic not dogmatic...[Murray] demythologized the Constitution. Like others in the '50s, he called for an "end of ideology" and its replacement by "civility." "The American Catholic is on good ground," he wrote, "when he refuses to make an ideological idol out of religious freedom and separation of church and state, when he refuses to 'believe' in them as articles of faith..."

"Civility," as Cuddihy argues, is the regnant secular religion of our times; but the point has been made that the Catholic Bishops seek no longer to identify themselves with all things American. They are saying that our society and its systems *must* be compatible with Christian morality...and this *attitude* anyone with a genuine religious commitment should applaud.

The Church is the repository and custodian of Truth. Any understanding less trivializes religion. The Church may be able to tolerate pluralism in the political order, but never in the theological and moral orders. The Church cannot bless the political construct that places at its center of values an "I don't know" (which it then seeks to impose on the social tissue). In a word, the Catholic Church is not Protestant. In its exaltation of the final supremacy of the individual conscience, democratic capitalism is.

Now, what I want to see in May: will it be on these terms that the Catholic Bishops (predictably) slam capitalism? Or will there be a tired recitation of the system's mythical evils?* Dast the Bishops throw down their gauntlet as *Catholics?*

*Principally the structural absence of distributive justice, never mind that the noetic ideal is practically an impossible dream.

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CONFEDERATE MEMORIAL HALL

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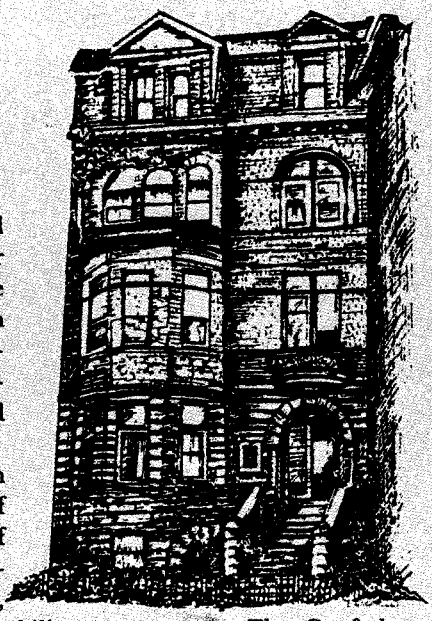

Confederate Memorial Hall was purchased after the War Between the States to house Confederate veterans. When the veterans died, the mansion was converted to a convention hall, museum and library.

Over the years the museum has acquired many artifacts of distinction: oil portraits of Confederate leaders, statuary, rare books and prints, battle flags and other memorabilia.

But primarily the Hall has been used as a cultural center where Southern ladies and gentlemen gather for Dixie Balls, diplomatic and congressional receptions, and lectures and educational programs that preserve and foster the Southern ethos.

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